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Eliza A. Blaker



Eliza A. Blaker

Eliza A. Blaker

Her Life and Work

Emma Lou Thornbrough



THE ELIZA A. BLAKER CLUB, INC.
and the INDIANA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
INDIANAPOLIS—1956



PREFACE

THIS VOLUME is written in memory of a woman whose dedicated love of small children and desire to improve the environment in which they lived caused her to make contributions of lasting importance to our educational system. For almost half a century the name of Eliza A. Blaker was synonymous with kindergarten work and teacher training in Indiana. As superintendent of the Free Kindergartens in Indianapolis and head of the Indianapolis Teachers College she led the way in the introduction of numerous new concepts and practices in the training of small children and the preparatory training of teachers, especially in the application of new developments in the study of child psychology.

Equally significant were her contributions in integrating the kindergartens with family life and the community. As both an educator and a social worker her vision led her to pioneer in a dozen different fields. Under her guidance the kindergartens not only served small children but all members of the family. They became centers for domestic training and shop classes and clubs and training classes for mothers. They welcomed all persons without regard to color or nationality. From the beginning Mrs. Blaker took a special interest in the colored population of Indianapolis, and in later years in the immigrants from southern Europe who were pouring into the city. In several other fields, such as supervised playground activities and classes for training Sunday School teachers, she made pioneer efforts. But far more significant than that she

led the way in introducing new practices, was the fact that at the heart of her work was her own deep religious faith and love of children and her conviction that the most important work of both teacher and parent was character training. This conviction she conveyed to all who were associated with her.

Because of the love and reverence which she inspired the Eliza A. Blaker Club, made up of alumnae and faculty of the Indianapolis Teachers College, was formed soon after her death in 1926. The members of the group began almost at once to plan the publication of a book in her memory and started to collect materials about her life and work. For various reasons the book was delayed until it was almost thirty years after Mrs. Blaker's death that this volume was begun. The lapse of time has meant that, with a few notable exceptions such as Miss Emma Colbert, most of Mrs. Blaker's contemporaries have died, and it has been impossible to gather information concerning her from many who knew her well. Mrs. Blaker left no personal papers and consequently many details concerning her personal life are lost. A complete biography of her is impossible. In writing this book the author has relied principally upon notes which Mrs. Blaker made for many of her speeches, upon clippings and other materials collected by the Eliza A. Blaker Club, and upon personal reminiscences of persons who knew her. From these sources she has attempted an account of Mrs. Blaker's work and a delineation of the woman and her philosophy.

October 1955

E. L. T.

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I

PHILADELPHIA: CHILDHOOD AND YOUTH

ELIZA ANN COOPER was born in Philadelphia on March 5, 1854, the first child of Jacob and Mary Jane Cooper. In her parentage were mingled the two elements which had been most significant in the history of her native city. The Cooper family were of English Quaker ancestry; her mother, who was Mary Jane Gore before her marriage, was Pennsylvania Dutch.

The child was born during a period of sectional strife and bitterness, which was to culminate in the outbreak of civil war when she was seven years old. The city where she was born had long been a center of antislavery activity as the result of the interest of the Quakers in the movement. Her father was an abolitionist, and unlike some persons of Quaker background who sought emancipation by nonviolent means, his opposition to slavery was of the militant variety. So firmly did he believe in the righteousness of the Union cause during the Civil War that he volunteered for military duty at the age of forty. Cooper was a man with little formal education but keen intellectual interests who read a great deal and was an excellent conversationalist. He was not a practical man and was not a success in the business world. But he inspired in his daughter a love of learning at an early age and entertained her with stories of his own invention which she remembered with special tenderness throughout her life.

Eliza's German mother was a different sort from the idealistic and rather unworldly Jacob. Her own practical qualities compensated somewhat for the lack of such qualities in him. She was a woman of courage and resourcefulness and a determination which somehow surmounted obstacles which appeared to be insurmountable. Eliza appears to have been endowed with a happy combination of qualities from both her parents. From her idealistic father she no doubt derived some of her own idealism and sense of duty to principle as well as her intellectual qualities. She was at the same time an eminently practical person, as was her mother, and she possessed the indomitable courage and resourcefulness which characterized her mother.

The years of Eliza's childhood were happy ones, although the Cooper family had little money. Besides Eliza there was a younger brother, John, whom she adored. In addition to the responsibilities of caring for the children Mrs. Cooper operated a tailoring shop in the home. Even as a child the little girl began to learn to assume responsibilities. She helped care for her little brother, ran errands for her mother, and even began to learn the rudiments of sewing by making clothes for her rag doll while her mother worked on garments for her customers.

The routine of the household was rudely shattered by the outbreak of the Civil War. First the wartime conditions lessened the demand for the making of ladies' dresses and created a shortage of dress materials, almost ruining Mrs. Cooper's small business. Far more serious was the decision of Jacob Cooper to enlist in the Union Army. He was already forty years old and in no danger of being drafted. Nevertheless, as the war dragged on and victory was not yet in sight, he felt compelled to volunteer his services in the cause of human freedom. His wife, left with the care of two small children and a

business already impaired by the war, supported him in his decision and cheered him on as he marched off with his regiment.

Faced with the necessity of earning a living for the children the mother turned to the only occupation in which she had had experience. She secured employment in a shop where soldiers' uniforms were made. The work was wearisome, the hours long, the pay small, but she embarked upon her new task with her usual determination. Her employers soon recognized her superior qualities and made her a foreman in charge of a group of workers.

While her mother worked, Eliza and John spent much time with their maternal grandmother. The grandmother lived in the German section of Philadelphia, where dirt of any sort was regarded as a kind of demon to be exorcised. Scrubbing and sanding the floors, scrubbing the front stoop, polishing pots and pans and door knobs, were a part of the routine which left a deep impression on Eliza. In later years she was to show a similar passion for cleanliness. From her grandmother she also learned lessons in thrift, which she never forgot. But the grandmother, who was deeply religious and something of a mystic in spite of her practical qualities, had a further influence. She was convinced that God was always near at hand and that he revealed Himself to her when she prayed. She talked much to her granddaughter about God and prayer, and no doubt helped to inspire the unswerving faith in the availability of Divine help which was so deeply ingrained in Eliza.

Meanwhile the war dragged on with little news from Jacob Cooper. Finally on one dreadful day came the word that he was missing in action. He was later reported to have been wounded, and Mary Jane Cooper resolved to go and find him. All efforts to dissuade her were in vain. Leaving little John with relatives she and Eliza, who was now ten years old, started

on their quest. They found him in a hospital in Washington, D. C., in critical condition. But his joy at seeing his wife and daughter and their loving interest in him had a beneficial effect, and he began to improve. Mrs. Cooper insisted upon staying near her husband until he had sufficiently recovered and could be discharged and taken home. All the while Eliza stayed with her mother. The search for the father, the long visits to the grim hospital, the sight of so much suffering—these were disturbing experiences for a sensitive child. But they helped to create in her a sympathy for human suffering, and her mother's courage helped to teach her how to face suffering. There were also bright spots in the long stay in Washington. Frequently Eliza saw President Lincoln, sometimes when he went for a walk, at other times when he came to the hospital to visit the wounded soldiers. She also saw a man with a great bushy white head and impressive stature whom she identified in later years as Walt Whitman.

When the father was well enough, they took him back to Philadelphia. This meant another adjustment and offered another challenge to the mother. Jacob Cooper's health was permanently impaired by his wartime experience, and it was impossible thereafter for him to do strenuous work. The close of the war brought an abrupt end to the demand for soldiers' uniforms and hence an end to Mrs. Cooper's employment. A solution to the problem was found in opening a delicatessen in a building which served as both business and living quarters, the family occupying rooms above the shop. In spite of the father's impaired health this was a happy period. In the years after the war a third child, Mary, was born to the Coopers. Since the mother had to devote most of her energies to the family business, much of the care of the baby sister fell upon Eliza, a responsibility which she gladly assumed. Her

attitude toward the little girl, who was so many years her junior, was almost maternal.

Jacob Cooper's health worsened, and after a time he was unable to give any assistance in operating the shop. The entire responsibility for making a living for the family devolved upon Mrs. Cooper, with such help as Eliza and John were able to give. Finally, when Eliza was fifteen, her father died. The loss of the father, whom she had adored, was a desolating experience for her as well as her mother, but it had the effect of drawing mother and daughter even more closely together.

At fifteen Eliza was of an age when many daughters of working class families were expected to leave school and go to work to supplement the family income. After her father's death Mrs. Cooper's relatives urged that Eliza go to work in the cotton mills, but Mary Jane Cooper resisted their well-meaning advice. She recognized that her daughter had the capacity for something better than this and insisted that she continue in school and prepare herself to teach. Although it meant sacrifices and hard work on the part of the entire family, Eliza was given the opportunity to attend the Girls Normal School of Philadelphia. Mrs. Cooper turned once more to dressmaking to earn a living. Eliza was grateful for the opportunity to finish her schooling and was intensely aware of the sacrifice it entailed. She felt a tremendous obligation to succeed at school and to finish her training as soon as possible.

Eliza Cooper's school years were far from carefree. She had little time for recreation and no money for pleasures. She walked the five miles to and from school in order to save carfare. At one point Mrs. Cooper's health broke from overwork, and it was necessary for Eliza to nurse her mother in addition to attending classes and studying. But the prospect of finishing school and being able to relieve her mother of financial responsibilities spurred her on. Little is known of her experi-

ences at the normal school. Apparently the course of instruction, with its emphasis on formalism and convention, did not stimulate her imagination or enthusiasm. The program to her was merely a means to an end and not a source of inspiration. She felt that most of the teaching staff showed little interest in the personal problems of the students. Some of her teachers and fellow students considered her reserved and overly serious—which is not surprising in view of the circumstances of her home life. Others of the teachers recognized in her the qualities that were to make her a great teacher. One of them, speaking of her a few years later, recalled that she possessed “indomitable energy, great independence of character, good common sense, and a mind of no ordinary caliber.”

Just three months before the date of her graduation from the normal school Eliza had an opportunity to take a position as a teacher in the Philadelphia schools. Financial conditions at home were too desperate to warrant a refusal, yet the alternative was so frightening that she hesitated to accept. The authorities at the training school would give their consent to her acceptance of the proffered position only if she were able to continue her studies at night so that she would be able to take her final examinations with the rest of the class. If she was unable to do this, she would lose credit for all the work she had taken at the school. Being her mother's daughter she accepted the challenge. She took the teaching position and also determined to graduate with her class from normal school. The thought of the sacrifices which her mother had made for her and the hopes that would be blasted if she were to fail sustained her. She dared not fail. Every night she studied—sometimes until two o'clock, sometimes until dawn—and during the day she taught. Somehow she lived through those months. At the end of the school year she presented herself for her final examinations and passed them with high honors. She

not only graduated with her class in June, 1874, but was chosen valedictorian; her beautiful voice and her poise had already begun to win her a reputation as a speaker.

In some respects those last months before her graduation were the most difficult of her life. Her own experience caused her to be sympathetic toward other young women undergoing similar struggles. In later years when she headed a teacher training school she was always particularly interested in the plight of girls who were having financial difficulties and personally came to the assistance of many of them.

With Eliza's earnings to supplement the family income conditions at home were less straitened. Grateful for the sacrifices which had been made in her behalf Eliza was eager to help her brother John who had left school and gone to work so that she might finish school. She persuaded him to return to high school and assisted him until he finally graduated with honors from the Medical School of the University of Pennsylvania. Since she had once dreamed of a medical career for herself, she took great satisfaction and pride in the achievements of her brother. After his graduation John became a successful physician in Albany, New York, where he remained the rest of his life.

After completing her training at the Philadelphia Normal School, Eliza taught in both the primary and grammar schools of that city. She also spent some time teaching adults at the artisans' night school. Although she was successful in these varied types of teaching, she had not yet found work which completely satisfied her. It was not until 1876, at the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition, that she first caught a glimpse of the work that was to be her true calling.

The Centennial Exposition made Philadelphia for a time a center where were displayed the finest achievements of the day in the fields of art, education, and science. Eliza Cooper

learned many things from her visits to the Exposition halls, but to her the most fascinating attraction was the demonstration kindergarten, one of the most popular exhibits.

The kindergarten movement, which was just beginning in the United States in 1876, originated in Germany as the result of the work of Friedrich Froebel. Although many others, such as Comenius, Rousseau, and Pestalozzi, contributed to the shaping of theories which in time revolutionized educational methods in the United States, no other influence was so great in the development of the methods of training small children as that of Froebel.

The foundations of Froebel's educational philosophy were grounded upon his belief in God and in nature and man as expressions of God. He believed that all human beings contained in themselves a spark of the divine, and that it was man's destiny to reveal this divinity. Inasmuch as man was a part of nature the rules for the education of man and thus for the revelation of his divinity must be found in nature. In his own words: "Education should lead and guide man to clearness concerning himself and in himself, to peace with nature, and to unity with God."¹ The task of the educator then was to recognize and to conform to the different stages in the natural development of the child and to utilize the child's natural instincts. The educator could create nothing in the child; he could merely superintend the development of innate faculties. Froebel believed that education "in its first principles, should necessarily be passive, following (only guarding and protecting), not prescriptive, categorical, interfering."²

In his studies of children Froebel emphasized the importance of the effects of infancy and early childhood upon the individual's later development. He attached much significance to the role of the mother in the training of the child. His concept of education rested also on his view that humanity was an



Eliza A. Cooper
on Graduation from the
Philadelphia Normal
School



Eliza A. Cooper
Aged Eight Years



Arabella C. Peelle Kindergarten, West Pearl Street



Kindergarten Class at Coe Street School

organic whole. Hence, since the basic purpose of education was to enable the individual to recognize his part in this unity, he also emphasized the importance of the child as a part of society. Therefore, the kindergarten was organized to fill the need for group activity. The name itself—"child garden"—reflected his interest in nature and analogies which he found between the child's development and the natural unfolding of a flower.

In training small children Froebel sought to use such natural activities as the child's love of play and his imitative instincts. He invented many songs and games which were in a sense "play," but which also had an educational purpose. He also stressed the importance of nature study, and took the children on walks in the woods and helped them to plant and tend gardens. In his own words the object of his methods was "to give the children employment in agreement with their whole nature, to strengthen their bodies, to exercise their senses, to engage their awakening mind, and through their senses to make them acquainted with nature and their fellow creatures; it is especially to guide aright in the heart and the affections, and to lead them to the original ground of all life, to unity with themselves."

Froebel's theories and methods were first brought to the United States by German immigrants. Mrs. Carl Schurz, for example, opened a kindergarten in Watertown, Wisconsin, in 1855. Among the first persons other than Germans to be interested in the movement was Elizabeth Peabody, sister-in-law of Horace Mann, who opened a kindergarten in Boston for a short time in 1860. She soon closed it and went to Germany for further study. On her return to the United States she devoted her time to writing and lecturing on the kindergarten, doing much to arouse interest in the movement throughout the United States. Meanwhile, other pioneers, such as Madame

Kriege, Susan Pollock, Maria Boelte, Susan Blow, and Alice H. Putnam, had opened kindergartens in Boston, Washington, New York, St. Louis, and Chicago.

Ruth Burritt was another person who played an important part in arousing public interest in kindergartens. Miss Burritt, elementary schoolteacher, had first become interested in Froebel's teachings from observing a kindergarten in Wisconsin. Realizing her need for training if she was to pursue the new work, she went East for study and later took a position as a kindergartner in Boston. When it was decided to have a demonstration kindergarten at the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition, Miss Burritt was appointed as teacher upon the recommendation of the Froebel Society of Boston. Under her direction the kindergarten soon became one of the most popular features of the fair. The tiny pupils, who were orphans from the Northern Home for Friendless Children, were brought to the exhibition grounds three days a week for demonstration sessions. The rest of the time Miss Burritt lived at the orphanage with them and succeeded in causing several reforms to be carried out at the institution. During the demonstration sessions the children went through a typical kindergarten routine, with songs, marching, games, and periods devoted to handicrafts. Thousands of visitors thronged past to watch them and to listen to Miss Burritt's explanations of the Froebelian system. As the result of the interest aroused by the demonstrations, kindergartens were started for the first time in many communities throughout the United States.

Miss Burritt's work with the little orphans and her lectures on the principles underlying the kindergarten work made a favorable impression upon the people of Philadelphia, and especially upon the members of the Society of Friends. When the Exposition closed she was engaged by a group of Friends to organize a kindergarten in the city and to undertake a train-

ing program for kindergarten teachers. Soon afterwards a class of young women, most of whom were from Quaker families, was organized to learn kindergarten methods. Thus was inaugurated the Centennial Kindergarten Training School, which continued in operation for several years under Miss Burritt's direction.

Among the many visitors to the exhibition kindergarten none had been more attracted to the work of Miss Burritt than Eliza Cooper. There for the first time she learned something of the methods and philosophy of Froebel and realized that she had found what she had unconsciously been groping for. She enrolled in the training school to learn more of the system. Here she drank deeply of Froebel's philosophy and found in it doctrines which were to have a profound influence upon her own educational philosophy throughout her life. The strong attraction which the teachings of Froebel had for her lay no doubt in the fact that they were congenial to her own inchoate beliefs. Like Froebel she was intensely, almost mystically religious, and like him she had a great love for children. Miss Burritt regarded Miss Cooper as one of her pupils who had best grasped the meaning of Froebel and his system. She was graduated from the training school with honors in May, 1880. Her graduation essay on "The Kindergarten and Public Education" was printed in a Philadelphia newspaper and aroused so much interest that it was later reprinted.

In Ruth Burritt, Eliza found an inspiring example and a warm friend. The teacher in turn followed the later career of her pupil with interest and pride. She referred to students, who were trained in the school which Eliza Cooper Blaker founded, as her "granddaughters." When Ruth Burritt died in California at the age of eighty-nine, a group of these "granddaughters" from the Blaker school paid tribute at her funeral. At the Centennial School Eliza also had an oppor-

tunity to know Elizabeth Peabody, who came there every year to give a series of lectures on the moral and religious education of children. Miss Peabody had a high regard for Eliza Cooper's abilities and recommended her warmly as a kindergarten.

Although graduation from the training school and entry into kindergarten work, to which she was to devote the remainder of her life, made the year 1880 a memorable one for Eliza, it was even more important as the year of her marriage. A few months after her graduation, on September 15, she became the wife of Louis J. Blaker. The marriage was the culmination of a romance which had begun in childhood. Louis, who was a few years her senior, had been a neighbor and playmate. Her earliest memories of him were associated with helping him to build a birdhouse. Although the Cooper and Blaker families had later moved to different neighborhoods, Louis remained a friend of Eliza and John. As a young man he was a frequent visitor in their home, and in time he and Eliza recognized their mutual love and decided upon marriage.

The wedding was a simple one in the Cooper home, in keeping with the Quaker tradition of the family. The minister who performed the ceremony was the same one who had married Eliza's parents. Thus began a union which was to last more than thirty years and which was to be a singularly happy one. As long as Louis Blaker lived he was the mainstay in Eliza's life. Although throughout their married life she was to have a varied and strenuous career outside her home, her greatest happiness was in the companionship of her husband. He in turn was entirely devoted to her and sympathetic toward her work. His support and encouragement spurred her on in all her enterprises, and his moderation and judgment sometimes prevented her from falling into errors because of her impulsiveness. He possessed social graces which she lacked and a

sense of humor which enabled him to make her laugh at situations which at first seemed to her serious problems.

For a short time after her marriage Eliza Blaker taught in the Vine Street Kindergarten in Philadelphia. In 1882 she received an invitation to go to Indianapolis, Indiana, to organize a kindergarten in connection with the Hadley Roberts Academy, a private school which had recently been opened there. Hiram Hadley, principal of the school, and Abraham C. Shortridge, former superintendent of the Indianapolis Public Schools, who was also associated with the academy, corresponded with educators throughout the United States in an effort to find someone to organize a kindergarten department. On the recommendation of Elizabeth Peabody and Ruth Burritt they asked Eliza Blaker to undertake the work.

The invitation came at a time when Louis Blaker was suffering from poor health. Both he and his wife thought that a change of climate and environment might be beneficial to him, and accordingly they decided to make the move. So with Eliza's mother and her sister Mary, the Blakers left staid Philadelphia to try their fortunes in a much younger and smaller but nevertheless bustling city of the Middle West.

II

INDIANAPOLIS, 1882-1900: LAYING THE FOUNDATIONS

INDIANAPOLIS IN THE EIGHTIES was in a state of transition from a peaceful country town to an industrial city. In 1880 the census showed a population of more than seventy-five thousand. By 1890 it had passed the one hundred thousand mark. In appearance it retained many of the features of a small town, with broad streets most of which were unpaved, and fine shade trees. The Hadley Roberts Academy, where Eliza Blaker began her work in Indianapolis, was located on North Meridian, a street of attractive homes, described by local admirers as "one of the handsomest thoroughfares in the land." The fact that most of the houses were of frame was a surprise to the Blakers, accustomed as they were to the brick of Philadelphia. Electric lighting was introduced into the city in 1876 and was soon in use for street lights and illuminating private homes. But on every corner in the business district there were still pumps on which hung tin drinking cups and dippers for the use of the general public. While the city still had much to learn of correct sanitation, there was increasing evidence of cultural progress. Bookstores were growing in number, and the popularity of lectures and musicals showed that there was a lively interest in intellectual and aesthetic matters. Numerous organizations of women showed that mem-

bers of the feminine sex were beginning to take an interest and play a more active role in community affairs.

Further evidence of the maturing of the city was an increased concern with and a changed attitude toward social problems which came with the growing population and industrialization. The effects of the depression of the eighteen seventies, which lingered in Indianapolis until the early eighties, emphasized the need for new ways of dealing with destitution and unemployment. The Indianapolis Benevolent Society had been organized as early as 1835 to carry on charitable work among the poor, but the growth of the city and the depression revealed the inadequacy of the old system. In 1878 the society, which was on the verge of dissolution, was reorganized and revitalized through the efforts of the Reverend Oscar McCulloch, pastor of the Plymouth Congregational Church, and renamed the Charity Organization Society. In 1879 the new organization began for the first time a systematic investigation of charity cases in the city and opened an employment agency in an effort to find work for some of the needy. The new type of charity which the organization represented sought to discover and eradicate the causes of poverty and crime, rather than merely give indiscriminately to paupers. In 1880 the Charity Organization opened the Friendly Inn as a place of refuge and rehabilitation for destitute men. Other benevolent societies of the city were soon affiliated with the Charity Organization. All of them sought to co-operate in combating the causes of poverty and crime and in rehabilitating the victims of poverty. The philosophy underlying these efforts was summed up in an early report of the society which declared: "When the history of the nineteenth century's charitable and legislative effort to better the world shall be read, its watchword will doubtless be found to have been reform."¹

The organization of the Indianapolis Free Kindergarten and Children's Aid Society, which was founded in 1881 and affiliated with the Charity Organization, was an integral part of this reform movement. An investigation of the condition of the children in the poorer districts of the city, which had been made through the efforts of Dr. McCulloch, had revealed a situation which aroused some of the women of the city to action. They had heard of the kindergartens in Boston and San Francisco and hoped to initiate a similar program for the children of Indianapolis. In the winter of 1881-82 a trial kindergarten was held and proved a success. To carry on the work a group of five women organized a Free Kindergarten Society. The original members were: Mrs. George W. Hufford, Mrs. Julia H. Goodhart, Mrs. John R. Hussey, Mrs. James L. Fugate, and Mrs. Joseph Closser.²

The founding of the society occurred at almost exactly the same time that Eliza Blaker arrived in Indianapolis to organize the kindergarten in connection with the Hadley Roberts Academy. Trained kindergartners were rare, and the members of the society, learning of her qualifications, asked her to take charge of the organization of a free kindergarten. To the young woman from Philadelphia the invitation seemed almost heaven sent. To her the opportunities for good, which work among the poor offered, were far more attractive than work with the children of the well-to-do, who attended the private academy. She promptly accepted the offer and began at once to set up the free kindergarten. Her connection with the academy was severed after a few months, and the rest of her life was devoted to the free kindergartens of Indianapolis.

In September, 1882, a kindergarten was opened in the Friendly Inn which was located on West Market Street, near the rolling mills, in one of the neediest districts of the city. The difficulties encountered during that first year would have

daunted another person, but they simply gave Eliza Blaker an opportunity to display her abilities as an organizer and a social worker. During the first months kindergarten equipment was almost entirely lacking. There were not even chairs for the children; they had to sit on pieces of wood cut by the tramps who frequented the inn. Supplies were so limited that on some occasions the teachers went to near-by stores and begged the merchants to give them paper for the use of the children. Despite the lack of money the first year was a great success. Although the kindergarten, like every other educational innovation, encountered some criticism, nearly everyone who actually became acquainted with the work which Eliza Blaker was attempting, caught a glimpse of her vision and was infected with her enthusiasm.

This one small kindergarten was the beginning of an experiment that was to grow into a program of social welfare that was to have far-reaching effects upon Indianapolis. For Mrs. Blaker had a vision of kindergartens which would benefit all the needy children of the city and a system of social work that would reach not only the children but all members of the family, and which would serve to uplift the entire community. Her plans also required a staff of trained kindergartners. Since there were no persons with this training in the city and no money to pay them if there had been, one of the first things which she did was set up a school in her own home to train young women for kindergarten work. Under her supervision these student teachers could also be used to staff the expanding kindergartens.

In 1884 the Free Kindergarten Society was incorporated under the laws of Indiana. By this time the number of kindergartens had grown to three, with Eliza Blaker holding the post of superintendent. One of them was located in the Blackford Methodist Church on Market Street, a second in the W. C.

T. U. Chapel at Home Avenue and Yandes Street, and the third, which was for colored children, in the African Methodist Episcopal Church on West Vermont Street. During the school year of 1884-85 these kindergartens cared for approximately four hundred children. Every year the number of kindergartens and the enrollment grew. By 1900 there were twenty-three. All of them were free, without tuition charges of any kind, for the constitution of the Free Kindergarten Society declared that the object of the society was "the education and moral training of the children of the poor." However, there were varying degrees of poverty. Some of the kindergartens were located in areas in which most of the residents were destitute and frequently without hope or self-respect. In other neighborhoods children came from homes in which the parents, while in modest circumstances, were industrious and eager to give such financial support as they could to the kindergartens.

During the term of the first president of the Free Kindergarten Society, Mrs. Stanton J. Peelle, and largely through her personal solicitation, money was raised to purchase a lot on West Pearl Street on which was erected the Arabella C. Peelle Kindergarten, the first building owned by the society. In 1893 Mr. and Mrs. John C. Wright gave a lot opposite the City Hospital on Coe Street to the society. A bequest of three thousand dollars from the estate of Mark Davis was applied toward a building. This was later known as the Mary Turner Cooper Kindergarten in memory of Eliza Blaker's sister, who was its first principal. For a number of years it was the only kindergarten for colored children maintained by the society. During the early years these were the only buildings owned by the society. The other kindergartens were conducted in rented houses, or in churches, or in connection with other benevolent institutions. Among the last group were those in the Eleanor

Hospital, the Colored Orphans Asylum, the Board of Children's Guardians Home, and the Indiana Avenue Settlement. During the nineties the society also began to conduct summer kindergartens in some of the poorest districts.

The thousands of underprivileged children who poured into these kindergartens found in them something very different from the squalid environment from which most of them came. Those from the worst districts, who had never known any of the normal joys of childhood, especially aroused the pity and love of Mrs. Blaker. In an early report she spoke of their "sad and old faces" and their "vacant, far away expressions," when they first came to the kindergartens, and declared: "We hope to set them free, and to throw much sunshine into their young lives."³ In many cases their homes were so poor that the children could not attend kindergarten until they were given clothing. Their needs were ascertained by visits to the homes by the teachers and the members of the Free Kindergarten Society. Hundreds of pairs of shoes and other articles of clothing were distributed every year by the society. Teachers and members of the society also went early to the kindergartens in some districts to wash faces and hands and comb the hair of small tots who did not receive these attentions at home. Some of the kindergartens also served hot breakfasts, and all of them served free lunches.

In the kindergartens the children sang songs and played games. They learned to build with blocks and to weave strips of colored paper and to do elementary drawing and molding. They also learned something of nature study, planted seeds and watched them grow, and heard stories about birds and animals. This program, which was based on the teachings of Froebel, involved more than mere entertainment for the child. The larger purpose was suggested in an early bulletin of Mrs. Blaker's training school which said: "The kindergarten is a

miniature world, in which the little one is happy, is harmoniously developed, and learns to think and act as a 'reasonable being endowed with a high destiny'." In one of her early reports of the work of the Free Kindergarten Society the superintendent said: "Nature intends the early period of the child's life to be one of happiness. This can only be reached by surrounding the young human being with proper playthings to satisfy his innate impulses. The exercise of these toys must be under the guidance of a well-trained teacher, one who bears the child upon her heart, 'to inspire him with order, truth and goodness.' The use of Froebel's well devised system of playthings or gifts will bring joy to the child, by giving him mental and physical activity.

"These toys or objects train the eye to quickness of perception; acuteness and accuracy of observation; they develop deftness of touch and skill of hand; the sense of the beautiful is stimulated and cultivated; the judgment is exercised and strengthened; habits of industry are implanted; originality in thought and work is encouraged; and the religious instinct is nurtured and developed. Is this not a foundation for future life work?"⁴

Thus the work of the kindergarten involved more than the mere physical well being of the child. In the same report it was stated: "The object of our society is not simply to take the children off the streets for a few hours each day and to provide them with shelter, clothing and food." In another report Mrs. Blaker asserted: "Stress is often laid on one part of our work—the clothing, feeding and housing for a few hours of the day. This is the least portion of the labor and can easily be accomplished. To give present happiness, to uproot evil, to overcome inherited tendencies, to purify surroundings, to form character, to make the generations to come

thrifty and self-reliant—these are the phases of the subject requiring the deepest study and reflection.”⁵

At the very beginning of her career in Indianapolis Mrs. Blaker recognized that the effectiveness of her work with the children in the kindergartens would be greatly increased by winning the support of the mothers and by teaching them to do their part in the training of the children. Closer relationships with the homes were partially achieved by visits to the homes, which were an integral part of the kindergarten program. The kindergarten staff, student teachers, and members of the Free Kindergarten Society all took part in the program of regular visits to the homes in the kindergarten districts. In this way they acquainted the parents with the opportunities which the kindergartens afforded and ascertained the needs of the children. Soon another step was taken—that of bringing mothers to the kindergartens through the organization of mothers’ clubs. In 1884 the first such group met, and thereafter clubs were formed in all of the kindergartens. They were among the very first parent-teacher organizations of the United States. The meetings of the clubs were social gatherings at which musical and literary programs were presented and at which the work of the kindergartens was explained. In addition Mothers’ Instructions Classes were held twice each month in each kindergarten district. In these classes, which were taught by the kindergarten teachers, the mothers studied child care and child development.

Later the Mothers’ Council, consisting of delegates from each kindergarten district, was formed. It held monthly meetings at which subjects of practical value in homemaking and child care were discussed. Three times a year all the mothers from all the kindergartens in the city were invited to the Mothers’ Mass Meetings. These were social affairs at which mothers from all over the city mingled. Mrs. Blaker herself

always took an active part in these meetings. She usually spoke to the Mothers' Council and the mass meetings. The programs presented at the various mothers' meetings were an expression of her own philosophy in their blending of the practical and the inspirational. At the meetings of the council instructions were given on such matters as bathing a baby, caring for children's clothing, or table setting, and there was always a demonstration of practical cookery. But Mrs. Blaker was concerned with doing more than merely improving the physical environment of the child. At these meetings she talked to the mothers in simple language which they could understand of other aspects of motherhood and homemaking. She emphasized the role of the parent in the moral and spiritual development of the child. Always she stressed to them the sacredness of motherhood and the importance of the home as the starting place for the right conditioning of the child. At the same time she made concrete suggestions on the management of the home. A favorite theme was the importance of the sharing of responsibility by both parents—that the home should be a "republic" and not a "monarchy." She urged mothers to have respect for themselves, to be neat in their persons and orderly in their housekeeping, and to "live with their children." She often spoke of the importance of the parents' example of self-control and patience. But most important to her were the spiritual qualities of parenthood—love, sympathy, understanding, and justice. To her "a just mother" was one in whom "conscience was sovereign." And she added: "Justice is as important as affection." To thousands of mothers she repeated the theme: "The greatest work in the world is character-making. You are in this work."

Many mothers heard from her lips the only message of inspiration they had ever heard. In her talks, which always reflected her deep religious faith, they caught their first glimpses

of Christian teaching. It is not surprising that some of her listeners, after hearing her, spoke with awe and affection of her as a "wonderful preacher." The kindergarten experience not only brightened the life of the child but sometimes opened a new life for the mother as well. The following expressions of gratitude are typical of many which the kindergarten visitors heard. One mother said: "The kindergarten has done for my children what I could never do for them." Another said: "If God ever lets me get rich, the first thing that I will do is to give hundreds of dollars to the kindergarten. It has been the making of my children." Another confessed: "The kindergarten took care of my children when I was too drunk to do it. I will never forget that kindness. They have made me a better woman."⁶

Throughout her long career in Indianapolis Eliza Blaker always manifested a special interest in the colored people of the city. As already noted, one of the first kindergartens was for colored children, and Mary Cooper served as principal of a colored kindergarten. There were also clubs for colored mothers through which they learned of child care and carried on money-making activities for the kindergarten. These women, too, were grateful for the good that came to their children through the kindergarten. One colored mother reported to a mothers' meeting: "It (the kindergarten) certainly develops the soul as well as the mind, and teaches each little child how to be active and quick and useful in many ways, besides training them how to eat correctly, and how to be loving and true to one another, and in which way to revere God in many ways, and each teacher shows forth such great interest and patience toward each little child, so that they can't help but want to be there."⁷

The work of the kindergartens was not limited to the small children and their mothers. Other activities were undertaken for older children in an attempt to elevate all aspects of family

life. Perhaps the most important of these were the Saturday classes in domestic training. These classes, which were held in the kindergarten buildings, were begun in 1889 and grew rapidly. They were conducted at two levels—the “kitchen gardens,” which were for the younger children, and housekeeping classes for older girls in the age group from ten to sixteen or seventeen years. In the kitchen gardens the children learned to perform all sorts of household tasks by working with miniature equipment. They learned to use laundry equipment, to set the table, to wash dishes, to make beds, and to sweep and dust. They also learned to do simple sewing by making doll clothes. In addition they received some moral and literary training from the reading of stories which were selected to impart general information and also to cultivate a desire for good reading.

In the housekeeping classes the older pupils were given instruction in marketing, laundry work, house cleaning, and the actual cooking and serving of food. There were also classes in dressmaking and millinery. The first domestic training class was held in the Pearl Street kindergarten in 1889, and the following year a similar class was opened for colored girls. Soon colored boys also asked admission so that they might receive training which would equip them for work as cooks and waiters. In response to their plea a special class for colored boys was opened.

Most of the pupils in the Saturday classes came from homes in which they did not have an opportunity to learn good housekeeping. As a result of the training received in the classes, they were expected to improve the conditions in their own homes by putting into practice during the week the lessons which they learned on Saturday. The primary purpose of the classes was not vocational training but to teach the child to be useful in the home—“to make her a good daughter, a

helpful sister, a better woman, and in time a worthy mother." The influence of the children, it was hoped, would in turn benefit the parents, and the classes were intended "to teach the children that cheerful faces, kind words, gentle tones of voice, clean rooms, well cooked food, a neat table, will keep father at home in the evening, make mother a happier woman, and . . . be an incentive for good to both parents."⁸

Some of the children trained in these classes took full responsibility for preparing the meals for the entire family, particularly if the mother worked outside the home. One colored boy whose mother was dead became an excellent cook and housekeeper for his father and younger brother.

In addition to the housekeeping classes there was a Saturday class for training nursery maids. During the week the pupils had an opportunity to practice what they learned by caring for younger brothers or sisters or by caring for babies in a nursery which the Free Kindergarten Society conducted for the children of working mothers.

These ventures were the pioneer efforts at domestic training in the Middle West. Other cities in other parts of the country later adopted programs modeled on the one started by Mrs. Blaker. The Saturday classes in Indianapolis continued for many years until domestic science classes became a part of the curriculum of the public schools, after which most of them were discontinued. Although a few boys attended the domestic training classes, they were primarily for girls. For boys shop classes were formed in which they learned simple manual arts.

Mrs. Blaker was also a pioneer in the development of directed playground activities. The first such playground was opened in Military Park in Indianapolis and was called the Merritt Playground after its sponsor, George Merritt, who has sometimes been called the father of the Indianapolis park

system. Mrs. Blaker acted as supervisor of the project, assisted by members of the kindergarten training classes. The playground not only furnished wholesome recreational opportunities for the children in the neighborhood but according to police reports also had the effect of deterring disorderly conduct on the part of adults who frequented the park. As funds became available, other playgrounds were opened under the sponsorship of the Free Kindergarten Society. The society continued the playground work until it was taken over by the city park system.

In addition to the Saturday classes a number of other activities for older children were undertaken. Several juvenile clubs were organized which attempted to inculcate an interest in reading and discussion. Among them were book clubs, literary societies, current topic clubs, and science clubs, which met in the afternoons under the direction of kindergarten teachers. For older boys and girls who could not attend afternoon meetings home library groups, patterned after similar groups in Boston, were organized. Books and magazines were placed in the homes for the use of the entire family. The older children discussed the books which they had read at meetings which were held in the homes under the supervision of an adult visitor.

After the children "graduated" from the kindergartens, there were continued efforts to keep in touch with them and to promote in them an interest in wholesome recreation and in leading happy, useful lives. Groups of former pupils were organized into various clubs which met at night in the kindergarten buildings. One of them was the "Pleasure Club," the members of which devoted their energies to debating and physical culture. The "Order of St. Elizabeth" was made up of girls who devoted their evenings to fancy work and book reports. There were also the "Knights of the Kindergarten,"

boys of from eleven to fifteen years in age, and the "Secret Service Club," another boy's group, and several others. All of them were loyal supporters of the kindergartens, willing to perform any service they could for the institutions which had brightened their early years.

In addition to the club meetings there were parties which were purely social affairs. Every month in every kindergarten district there was a party for all of the neighborhood children in the nine to twelve year age group. On other nights there were parties for boys and girls from thirteen to eighteen years. There were also held regularly evening affairs for the entire family—fathers, mothers, and children—at which entertainment in the form of lectures, musicals, charades, and stereoptican exhibits was presented.

Thus from one small kindergarten in 1882 the influence of Mrs. Blaker and her associates spread in an ever widening circle, brightening the squalor of the dingiest parts of the city. An early report of Mrs. Blaker's suggests the scope of the work of the Free Kindergarten Society and its influence: "It not only brightens the home by the happiness of the children coming from the kindergarten, the timely aid rendered in matters of clothing and advice, the nourishing lunch provided for the little ones, the enjoyment of father, mother and children at musical and literary entertainments prepared for them, but the home is being made neat, orderly and healthful through the efforts of the older sisters who attend weekly our Domestic Training Schools or Kitchen-gardens."⁹

In reporting the work of the kindergartens in 1900 Mrs. John H. Holliday, president of the executive board of the society, said: "The Indianapolis Free Kindergarten and Children's Aid Society does in one respect the work of the college settlement. Many of the teachers sleep at home, but otherwise their whole time is spent in the districts. The work of the

kindergarten proper is done in the forenoon. In the afternoon the young ladies study or teach in our Normal School, make visits to the homes of the children, talk with the mothers and older members of the family. In the evenings, the time is spent with entertainments, clubs, classes, chiefly with young people of the districts.”¹⁰

An integral part of the kindergarten system during the early years was the training school for kindergartners. As mentioned above, when the work of organizing the free kindergartens was started there was no money to pay kindergartners, nor were there any teachers in Indianapolis trained in the Froebelian system. With her usual resourcefulness Eliza Blaker set out to solve this problem by opening a training school and using the student teachers to help staff the kindergartens. Thus hand in hand with the growth of the kindergartens and their allied activities went the growth of a normal school which trained thousands of young women who not only staffed the kindergartens in Indianapolis but helped to carry the movement to other communities.

The training school was started in 1882 while Mrs. Blaker was still associated with the Hadley Roberts Academy. The first student was Mary G. Lewis (later Mrs. George D. Edwards). Eight young women completed the first training class and were graduated in June, 1883. In addition to Mrs. Edwards the other members of the class were the Misses S. J. Brandt, Helen Craig, Gertrude H. Frommholz, Annie L. Oliver, A. M. Odear, Sarah A. Skillen, and Mary T. Cooper, sister of Eliza Blaker. During the training period the young ladies gained practical experience by teaching in the kindergartens in the mornings. The afternoons were devoted in part to class work and partly to visiting homes in the kindergarten districts. Some time was spent also in soliciting funds and food and materials to keep the kindergartens operating. Classes

were held at first in Mrs. Blaker's home. Here the pupils came for instruction in the theory of teaching, psychology, and child study. Mary Lewis Edwards recalled in later years: "Our theory of teaching was literally learned at Mrs. Blaker's feet, for her bedroom was our classroom, and the home offered too few chairs for all to be seated, so the late comers sat on the floor."¹¹

Their enthusiasm undimmed by the lack of classrooms and equipment, the members of this first class begged and were granted the free use of the English Opera House, the city's newest and most impressive auditorium, for their commencement exercises. The paper and printing for the graduation program were the gifts of businessmen of the city. In connection with the graduation exercises there was an exhibition of the work of the kindergartens, and each of the graduates read an essay on some aspect of kindergarten training. Thus the exercises gave the community an opportunity to learn something about the new educational experiments. The commencement address was given by the Hon. Stanton J. Peelle, whose wife was the president of the Free Kindergarten Society.

The school was known at first as the Kindergarten Normal Training School. After a few years the name was changed to the Indiana Kindergarten and Primary Normal Training School. In 1905 it became the Teachers College of Indianapolis. But the name of its founder was better known than any of these names, and it was popularly referred to as the Blaker Teachers College or simply as "Mrs. Blaker's." Until 1913 the school was a part of the kindergarten system and under the direction of the board of the Free Kindergarten Society. Eliza Blaker held the dual position of superintendent of the kindergartens and president of the training school.

The greatest problem of the school in the early years was finding suitable quarters. For twenty-one years it was without

a permanent home. During the first years classes were conducted in such diverse spots as Mrs. Blaker's home, the Tabernacle Chapel, the basement of the African M. E. Church, the Sunday School rooms of the Second Presbyterian Church, and the kindergarten building on West Pearl Street. For several years the headquarters were in the kindergarten in Coe Street, which was near the City Hospital and Pest House, a location described as both uncomfortable and unhealthful, with "the distressing scenes and odors, as well as the imminent danger of infection."¹² Not until 1903 did the school move into permanent quarters at Twenty-third and Alabama streets.

In spite of the lack of housing in the first years the school grew rapidly. From a total enrollment of twelve in 1883 it grew to a total of 143 in 1893 and to 344 in 1903. Many of the girls who enrolled were scholarship students. The Free Kindergarten Society gave free tuition to a limited number of students, who, in return, were expected to teach in the kindergartens and Saturday schools and to assist in the other activities sponsored by the Kindergarten Society. All students, whether on scholarship or not, were expected to spend some time in practice teaching under the supervision of a trained kindergartner.

In the beginning the training course was for kindergartners only and lasted for one year. In 1896 a course in primary work was added. Until 1898 a student might enroll for either a one- or a two-year course, but at that time the certificate for one year's work was abolished, and all students were henceforth required to complete two years of work in order to graduate. At the turn of the century the regular course of study included the theory and practice of the Froebel system and philosophy, psychology, and pedagogy, all of which were taught by Mrs. Blaker herself. Other subjects were English literature and composition, drawing and painting, botany, and handi-

craft work. There was also work in physical culture for which the students "were required to dress . . . without corsets, or restrictions to free movement of the neck, chest, arms, waist and feet."

In addition to this basic work advanced courses were given to prepare graduates who showed special aptitude to train kindergarten teachers. During the earliest years of the school's history courses not usually offered in kindergarten or primary training schools of that period were introduced. Playground work was offered as early as 1883. In 1889 courses in domestic training were begun, the first such courses in any training school in the Middle West. Classes in kindergarten teaching of blind children and in the training of nursery governesses were also introduced. In addition the regular classwork was supplemented each year by a series of lectures which were given by persons who were not regular members of the faculty. They embraced a wide variety of subjects—moral, religious, literary, and scientific.

Soon after the school opened special sessions for the benefit of persons who were already engaged in teaching but who wished to continue their training were begun. One session for teachers in the county schools, whose terms ended in the spring, began in April. The first summer school was held at Fountain Park on Eagle Lake near Warsaw, Indiana. Later sessions were held for many years at the Winona Summer School on Lake Winona.

The growth and accomplishments of the kindergarten and the normal school were all the more remarkable in view of the limited funds available to them. For years lack of money made the whole program precarious. Before 1900 no regular tax funds were available for the kindergartens, and throughout its entire history the college operated without any form of tax support. No tuition or other charges were made for the serv-

ices of the kindergartens and Saturday classes, and the income from tuition fees of the training school was small. The work was almost entirely dependent upon private benevolence. One of the vital activities of the members of the Free Kindergarten Society and the students at the school was solicitation. Mary Lewis Edwards, the first student at the school, recalled in later years: "One of the main branches which was especially stressed, but was later omitted from the required studies and duties, was the fine art of begging, in which we all became proficient. We begged for children to come to school, visiting their homes and trying to develop an interest in the school. We begged for money from our business and professional men and begged for clothing and for hot lunches from the ladies of the town." Mrs. George Hufford, who was intimately associated with both the Free Kindergarten Society, of which she was a founder, and the school, where she was a member of the faculty, also retained memories of the financial difficulties of the early years. "Sometimes," she said, "at the end of the month we faced an empty treasury, but Mrs. Blaker's undaunted spirit never failed to meet the exigency. She could always get the assistance of men of means who had been impressed by her wise management and her ardor in the training of little children."¹³

Mrs. Blaker was constantly seeking to acquaint the public with the work she was attempting to do. One of the most successful methods of publicizing her efforts was the holding of demonstration kindergartens, similar to the one which she had first witnessed at the Philadelphia Exposition, at the Indiana State Fair. The work of the kindergartens and the school went forward because she was notably successful in winning the support and confidence of public-minded, philanthropic citizens, who gave not only financial assistance but also time and effort. Many of them were from families that were leaders

in the financial, industrial, and professional circles of the city. Most of them were active in other philanthropic endeavors. Although they represented a variety of religious denominations, members of the First and Second Presbyterian churches of Indianapolis were most numerous among them.

The hardest workers were undoubtedly the ladies of the Free Kindergarten Society. Most energetic of all of them during the early years was Mrs. Stanton J. Peelle, who served as president of the society from 1882 to 1892. More than anyone else she was responsible for raising the money for the first kindergarten building owned by the society. Mr. Peelle, who was a prominent lawyer, was also a friend of the kindergartens. In 1892, when he was appointed a judge of the United States Court of Claims by President Benjamin Harrison, the Peelles moved to Washington, D. C., but they did not forget the children of Indianapolis. Through the efforts of Judge Peelle seeds for the gardens planted by the kindergarten children were furnished by the United States Department of Agriculture. After Mrs. Peelle, Mrs. E. G. Wiley, Mrs. James H. Baldwin, and Mrs. John B. Elam served as presidents of the Free Kindergarten Society in the nineties. Mr. Elam, who was a law partner of Benjamin Harrison and one of the most brilliant trial lawyers in the state, also served as legal adviser to the society and the normal school for many years.

Among the other women who served as officers of the Kindergarten Society or as members of the board of directors, the one who was most closely associated with Mrs. Blaker for the longest period of time was Mrs. Lois Hufford, wife of George W. Hufford, for many years principal of the Indianapolis High School. Mrs. Hufford, who was a native of Massachusetts, had graduated from Antioch College in Yellow Springs, Ohio, when it was one of two or three colleges in the United States which admitted women. There she met her

future husband, who was a fellow student. She came with him to Indianapolis and taught English for several years at the high school. In addition to her teaching she wrote several books on English literature and engaged in numerous charitable activities. She was one of the founders of the Free Kindergarten Society and served on its board of directors for many years. From the time of the founding of the normal school she gave special lectures on English literature and later became a full-time member of the faculty.

Other women who served as members of the board of directors or as officers of the Free Kindergarten Society before 1900 were: Mrs. Emil Wulschner, Mrs. Oscar C. McCulloch, Mrs. Hugh H. Hanna, Mrs. W. A. Taylor, Mrs. Louis Levey, Mrs. William Allen Bell, Mrs. Maria M. Finch, Mrs. J. H. Neuberger, Mrs. William D. Cooper, Mrs. Alexander M. Robertson, Mrs. J. W. Hess, Mrs. George Townley, Mrs. William H. H. Miller, Mrs. Joseph A. Closser, Mrs. C. S. Phillips, Mrs. Samuel Merrill, Mrs. George L. Rittenhouse, Mrs. S. K. Fletcher, Mrs. Henry Severin, and Mrs. Benjamin Harrison.

In addition to the board of directors, which was made up entirely of women, there was an advisory board of men. Among the first members was George Merritt, owner of woolen mills and associated with the Indiana National Bank, who was considered one of the foremost philanthropists in the city. He was a warm supporter of the kindergartens from the beginning and, as already noted, sponsored the first free playground in the city. Several of the leading clergymen of the city also acted as friends and advisers. The role of Oscar McCulloch has already been mentioned. The Reverend Nathaniel A. Hyde, who served as pastor of both the Plymouth and the Mayflower Congregational churches at different times, was also a member of the advisory board. Presbyterian ministers who were active

in behalf of the kindergartens and the training school during Mrs. Blaker's early years in Indianapolis were Matthias L. Haines of the First, Joseph A. Milburn of the Second, and J. A. Rondthaler of the Third (later Tabernacle) Presbyterian Church. Among educators one of Mrs. Blaker's warmest supporters was William Allen Bell, publisher of the *Indiana School Journal*. Mr. Bell served as a member of the advisory board until he left Indianapolis in 1898 to become Horace Mann's successor as president of Antioch College. Among other educators who served on the advisory board were Lewis M. Jones, superintendent of the Indianapolis Public Schools, Robert N. Lamb, and Harvey M. LaFollette.

Several other prominent persons were friends of Mrs. Blaker and supporters of her work although not official members of the advisory board. Among them was Gen. Benjamin Harrison, staunch member of the First Presbyterian Church. Other members of the church who were interested in the kindergartens were John C. New, editor of the *Indianapolis Journal*, John H. Holliday, editor of the *Indianapolis News*, and William Henry Harrison Miller, law partner of Benjamin Harrison and Attorney General of the United States during the Harrison administration.

The members of the Free Kindergarten Society were indefatigable in their efforts to raise money for the kindergartens. The membership of the society was divided into sections, each of which was assigned a quota of money which it raised through affairs such as teas, concerts, and dramatic productions. For many years the Free Kindergarten Ball, which was held each winter during the holiday season, was one of the largest and most fashionable social events of the winter in Indianapolis.

Sunday schools, churches, clubs, and individuals also made contributions of money. In addition businessmen and other friends gave supplies. Most of the food served in the kinder-

gartens was donated. Other persons gave coal and wood for fuel. Sometimes the use of a room or a house for a kindergarten was given rent free or for a nominal sum. All sorts of gifts, no matter how humble, were gratefully received. In later years Mrs. Blaker recalled that one woman always contributed mops and brooms for keeping the kindergarten clean.

Although there were no tuition fees in the kindergartens, persons in the communities where they were located were urged to give them as much support as they could. Grateful mothers who frequently asked, "Is there anything I can do for the kindergartens?" were encouraged to contribute to the lunch program and to give clothing that was no longer used by their own children. In some kindergartens all of the food for the lunches was furnished by people in the district. Beginning in 1889 concerts and entertainments were held in each district for the benefit of the kindergarten, tickets being sold by families in the neighborhood.

Other money-making projects were attempted from time to time. One of the most ambitious undertakings of the Free Kindergarten Society was the publication of a magazine, *The Kindergarten Monthly*, the first number of which appeared in November, 1896. The idea of the publication was conceived by Mrs. H. S. Tucker, who acted as manager of the enterprise. Mrs. George Hufford and Mrs. Alfred Potts joined her in editing the magazine. Later Mrs. Hufford and Mrs. Blaker acted as co-editors. The publication, which appeared monthly, contained news of the kindergartens and the normal school, articles on child training, some of which were written by Mrs. Blaker, and also stories, poems, and articles on literature. Articles and stories were sometimes contributed by members of the Indianapolis Literary Society. The magazine, which had real merit, from both the literary and professional standpoints, served the dual purpose of publicizing the kindergartens and

the training school and raising money. Funds were raised by selling advertising space as well as from subscriptions. In 1899-1900 the project earned \$570 for the society.

As the work of the kindergartens progressed and attracted favorable attention, both the Marion County Council and the Indianapolis School Board made small gifts, although they were not regular appropriations from public money. For example, in 1900 the Council gave five hundred dollars and the School Board one hundred dollars to the Free Kindergarten Society. That year the total receipts of the society were \$8,796, of which the most important item was over four thousand dollars raised by the various sections of the society. Over \$1,500 was given by individuals, while about nine hundred dollars were realized from tuition payment by normal school students.

Thousands of needy children were reached on a budget that today looks ridiculously small. For example, the total expenditures of the society in 1898 were \$7,311.59, or an average of \$1.30 per child. (In 1897 the average per child was \$1.14.) These figures included the payments for teachers' salaries, rents, fuel, and supplies.

As the kindergartens and training program expanded, Mrs. Blaker's reputation grew, and the record of her achievements in Indianapolis created a demand for graduates of the normal school throughout Indiana and far beyond the borders of the state. By 1900 a total of 529 young women had graduated from the school, while several hundred more had taken shorter courses. By that date the normal school and its graduates had been responsible for setting up kindergarten systems in fourteen cities outside of Indianapolis. In Indiana the first of these was in Evansville, where a system of kindergartens and domestic training classes modeled on those in Indianapolis was begun about 1895. The work was carried on by Miss Stella

McCarty, who trained her own teachers and then sent them to Indianapolis for advanced work. She later became the assistant superintendent of kindergartens in Indianapolis, and still later headed the Kindergarten Division at Goucher College in Maryland. In Lafayette a kindergarten society similar to the one in Indianapolis was organized. One of the sponsors was Professor Stanley Coulter of Purdue University. Mrs. Jessie Matlock, a graduate of Mrs. Blaker's school, was the first supervisor of the kindergartens in Lafayette. In 1897 at the request of a group of professors at Indiana University Mrs. Blaker sent one of her students, Miss Louise Brouse, to assume charge of opening a kindergarten in Bloomington.

Several kindergarten systems in other states owed their inception to Mrs. Blaker or her students. As early as 1890 a graduate of the training school had organized a charity kindergarten in Chattanooga, Tennessee. In 1891 another graduate started a system similar to that in Indianapolis in Detroit, Michigan. About this time a resident of Boston who visited the Saturday domestic training classes in Indianapolis was so impressed with them that she attempted to set up a similar program in Boston. In 1897 Miss Bertha Bradford, a graduate of the Blaker School, went to Grand Rapids, Michigan, to teach in a kindergarten. Three years later she was made supervisor of the entire kindergarten system in Cleveland, Ohio. Other graduates went to Warren, Ohio, and Erie, Pennsylvania.

Special types of kindergarten work were undertaken by other graduates. One of the Blaker students became a member of the order of Sisters of Charity of the Roman Catholic Church and conducted a kindergarten under the auspices of that order. Another graduate organized a kindergarten in the Indiana School for the Feeble Minded at Fort Wayne. Another directed a kindergarten in the North Carolina Institute for the Blind. Several former students of the normal school

were engaged in kindergarten work for deaf children. Others, working under the United States Department of the Interior, helped establish kindergartens for Indian children in reservations in Michigan, Wisconsin, South Dakota, Idaho, and Oklahoma Territory.

Just after the Spanish-American War, Anna M. Gould went to San Juan, Puerto Rico, to take charge of a training school and to initiate kindergarten work on the island. Louise Brouse left Bloomington, Indiana, after a short time to go to the Reed English School in Lucknow, India, to do kindergarten work.

These young women had received their training in a normal school which did not as yet have so much as a classroom building which could be regarded as its permanent quarters. But the physical limitations under which they had studied were more than offset by the quality of teaching and the inspiration which they had received from the founder of the school. And perhaps the lack of physical equipment in the training school taught them to improvise and made it easier for them to adjust to limitations which they encountered in their new environments.

Mrs. Blaker's work attracted nationwide attention among educators. When Miss Mary F. Ledyard, superintendent of kindergartens in Los Angeles, California, planned to go East to study the systems in other cities, several persons on the West Coast urged her: "Go to Indianapolis and see Mrs. Blaker's work there." In a report which she made on her return to Los Angeles Miss Ledyard declared that the domestic and manual training work in Indianapolis was unique among the systems which she observed. She paid tribute to other innovations of Mrs. Blaker's, particularly the summer kindergartens. Of all the forms of social work which she observed she considered them as "one of the broadest and most rational methods of

bettering the conditions of the masses, converting the dreary days of the poor little stay-at-homes into a happy holiday season, full of joyous activity and interest." The Los Angeles visitor was also impressed by the philanthropic efforts of the women of Indianapolis in behalf of the kindergartens. As for Mrs. Blaker, she declared that she was "one of the greatest (educational) authorities we have in our country today."¹⁴

Eliza Blaker also played an active part in national professional educational activities. In 1892 she was made secretary-treasurer of the Kindergarten Department of the National Education Association. She was one of the speakers at the Woman's Congress which was held at the Memorial Art Palace in Chicago in May, 1893, in connection with the Columbian Exposition. She and Mrs. May Wright Sewell of the Girls Classical School of Indianapolis served as members of the Board of Jurors on Elementary Education in connection with the exhibits held in the Liberal Arts Hall at the Exposition. In the exhibit the Indianapolis Normal School won an award for its art work.

Mrs. Blaker had already won for herself such a place of distinction in Indianapolis that she was one of the few women about whom biographical sketches were included in a volume entitled *Pictorial and Biographical Memoirs of Indianapolis and Marion County, Indiana*, which was published in 1893. Of Mrs. Blaker, the sketch said in part: "This lady has gained prominence and a national reputation through her remarkable and rare executive ability. So certain is success to follow all her efforts that her name in connection with any undertaking is regarded almost as a talisman of success. She is one of those in whom action becomes unconsciously a synonym of leadership, and by intuition and choice her attention has been turned largely to public matters in which the interests of numbers are involved. This has made her a marked figure in public movements in her home city and state."¹⁵

III

INDIANAPOLIS, 1900-1926: YEARS OF PROGRESS

By 1900 THE PIONEER PERIOD of Eliza A. Blaker's work in Indianapolis may be said to have been complete. Both the kindergartens and the teacher training school were established community institutions which had received nationwide recognition. With the new century both the kindergartens and the school entered upon a new era. In 1901 for the first time the Indiana General Assembly authorized tax support for the kindergartens. About the same time a concerted fund-raising campaign was undertaken in order to erect a permanent building for the school.

The enactment of the 1901 law represented a notable victory for Mrs. Blaker and the ladies of the Free Kindergarten Society. It was largely as the result of the various forms of pressure which they were able to bring to bear that the legislators were persuaded to provide for the tax levy. Among her many other accomplishments Mrs. Blaker was an effective lobbyist. During the sessions of the legislature she and her faculty and friends were busy meeting the lawmakers and attempting to acquaint them with the kindergartens and their needs. In later years Mrs. Lois Hufford gave Mrs. Blaker almost the entire credit for securing state aid for the kindergartens. She said: "Every act of the state legislature in the furtherance or extension of that system in Indiana was due to the initiative of Mrs. Blaker. No opposition ever daunted her; no lukewarm-

ness on the part of the legislators or private citizens discouraged her.”¹

The law enacted in 1901 provided that in any city with a population of more than six thousand the school board might levy a tax of one cent on each one hundred dollars of assessed property values for the support of kindergartens. It provided that the funds should be paid to aid free kindergartens which were conducted by an association which was approved by the superintendent of schools. In Indianapolis the Indianapolis Free Kindergarten Society was, of course, designated as the recipient of the funds. The assurance of tax support meant that the worst years, from the standpoint of finances, were over, although the revenue from taxes was sufficient to maintain only a part of the kindergartens already in operation in Indianapolis. It was still necessary to raise money from private sources in order that all of the kindergartens might remain open.

There remained also the need for adequate quarters for the teachers college. Under the leadership of Mrs. John H. Holli-day, who became president of the Free Kindergarten Society in 1899, and Mrs. H. S. Tucker, the treasurer, an intensive fund raising campaign was begun. The ladies of the society appealed to the people of Indianapolis for support. At a meeting in the English Opera House one of the most distinguished friends of the society, Benjamin Harrison, former President of the United States, praised the work of the kindergartens and made a plea for financial support of the society. He declared: “I think it is a shame that any community should place on these good women the burden of raising this money. It should be enough that they give their time and their sympathy and their good judgment to this work. They ought not be obliged to carry the financial burdens of it.”²

Most of the funds were to be applied to a building for the college, and it was decided to make the building a memorial to William N. Jackson, who had died in 1900. A pioneer resi-

dent of Indianapolis, Jackson had been associated with the early history of railroad growth in the city, but he was noted especially for his charities. Unmarried, he had devoted most of his income to benevolences, his greatest interest being in the welfare of children. He had been one of the warmest friends of the kindergartens in the early days, and his friends decided to perpetuate his name by making the new building a memorial to him.

By the spring of 1903 through the efforts of Mrs. Tucker, chairman of the fund raising committee, and her aides, enough pledges had been received to justify the purchase of a lot and the beginning of construction. A lot was bought at Alabama and Twenty-third streets. On April 3, 1903, the birthday of Friedrich Froebel, father of all kindergartens, the cornerstone of the William N. Jackson Memorial was laid. In the entrance of the completed building was the dedication :

This building is erected
In Memory of William N. Jackson
1809-1900

Whose precept was
Honor God and serve your fellow men;
Whose life was an example to all who
knew him, and whose heart was full of
love for little children.

That fall the college moved into its new quarters, the funds for which had been raised entirely from private subscriptions. The structure was a three-storied building of seventeen rooms, including classrooms, domestic science laboratories, a library, offices, gymnasium, and an assembly room. After more than twenty years in makeshift quarters the school finally had a home which filled its needs, for the time being, at least. In the new building for the first time it was possible for the entire student body and faculty to meet together at one time.

Daily chapel exercises and frequent social affairs for the entire group were now possible. The new school also became the center for the meetings of the Mothers' Council and the mass meetings of mothers as well as for social affairs of the various youth groups sponsored by the kindergartens.

In 1907 a silver anniversary celebration was held at the college, commemorating the twenty-fifth year of the kindergartens and Mrs. Blaker's work in Indianapolis. Speeches were made by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction and various persons who had been associated with the Free Kindergarten Society. In her talk Mrs. Blaker, after recounting some of the early struggles, spoke of the joy of her work and expressed her gratitude to all of the people who had helped in the work for children. At that time there were twenty-five kindergartens, one for each year that Mrs. Blaker had been in Indianapolis. Since the first kindergarten had opened in 1882 a total of 49,252 children had been enrolled in the kindergartens, while 53,171 women had attended the various mothers' groups, and 33,627 girls and boys had enrolled in the Saturday classes. At the close of March, 1907, a total of 5,574 had been enrolled in the normal school.

With the assurance of at least limited tax support the child welfare activities of the Kindergarten Society continued to expand. The number of kindergartens increased until in 1914 there were forty-seven. For a few years the number rose to sixty, but there were not sufficient funds to keep them in operation, and some of them had to close.

During the years before the First World War large numbers of immigrants from the countries of southern and eastern Europe began to settle in Indianapolis for the first time. It was among the children of these newcomers that the kindergartens did some of their most worth-while work. In 1910 an Italian kindergarten was opened. It began with only three children, but attendance was increased by inviting older children. At

first the parents were suspicious, and the children themselves shy and fearful. But a program that included many physical games and daily lunches (with an occasional special inducement in the form of ice cream) pleased the children, while handiwork made at the kindergarten and taken home by the children helped win the parents. A play fest to which both children and parents were invited did much to cement friendly relations. The kindergarten was continued through the summer with the assistance of some of the older sisters of the children. A year or two later a kindergarten was opened for Slavonic children, and thereafter others were opened primarily to serve the children of immigrants in those parts of the city where there were the largest groups of foreigners. Frequently the children first began to pick up the rudiments of the English language in the kindergartens since in most of their homes the native language was used exclusively. In many of the other kindergartens children of immigrants were enrolled with the children of native-born parents, and the two groups played happily together and helped each other in the process of Americanization.

A number of kindergartens for the colored children of the city continued to be maintained. Some new institutional kindergartens were opened also, including one in the Indianapolis Orphans Home and one in the Robert Long Hospital. In 1924 the Eliza A. Blaker Kindergarten was opened in the Riley Hospital, a hospital for children.

Beginning in 1907 a program was undertaken in conjunction with the Indianapolis Board of Health. Physicians employed by the Board of Health made regular inspections of the kindergarten centers, and a careful record of communicable diseases was kept in each district. In 1922 the Public Health Nursing Association took over the supervision of the six kindergartens which were maintained for foreign children. In 1924 the Board of Health assigned one school nurse to work in the kindergartens.

A social program continued to flourish in the kindergarten districts. Parties and entertainments were held on all the holidays, but the day before Thanksgiving was especially important. On this day the Free Kindergarten Society always furnished a special Thanksgiving dinner for all of the children. Mrs. Blaker tried to pay a visit to as many of the districts as possible on these festive occasions. In the fortieth year of the society (1922) one hundred and eighty social entertainments of all kinds were held in connection with the kindergartens. In addition a variety of activities for older children continued to be sponsored by the society. After domestic science classes were introduced as part of the regular curriculum of the Indianapolis public schools, there were fewer Saturday classes, but more emphasis was placed upon clubs, such as the Girls' Friendly Clubs, for girls between eight and twelve years, which met in the kindergarten buildings in the afternoons. For older children, both boys and girls, there were clubs which met at night. Social affairs for the members of these clubs were held from time to time in the college building.

Work among the mothers in the kindergarten districts continued to be regarded by Mrs. Blaker as among the most important activities. Classes for the instruction of mothers in the kindergartens for foreign children helped immigrant women to adjust to their new environment. Lessons in child care, sewing, cooking, and other practical subjects were given. Nurseries for the children of mothers who worked also continued to be maintained by the society.

The Mothers' Council of delegates from all of the kindergarten districts met regularly at the college building, and two or three times a year there were mass meetings to which all of the mothers of the city were invited. These meetings were important events in the lives of many of the mothers, and through them Mrs. Blaker kept in close touch with conditions in the districts and learned the mothers' point of view. If lack of

carfare or of a suitable hat threatened to prevent a woman from attending, the kindergarten supplied the deficiency. One of the main attractions at these meetings were the talks which Mrs. Blaker gave to the mothers on family life and child care. With her understanding of psychology she could make them laugh one minute and weep the next, but she always gave them a message which sent them away convinced of the importance of their role and resolved to be better mothers. Nor were the fathers ignored. There were three evening meetings in each district each year. Their programs were both social and instructive, and one was always planned especially for the fathers.

All of these activities depended in part upon the support which they received from the Free Kindergarten Society. From 1899 to 1920 Mrs. John H. Holliday was president of the board of the society and the moving spirit in all of its enterprises. After her long tenure she refused to accept re-election in 1920 and was succeeded by Mrs. David Ross, who held the position until 1928. Other women who served as officers or members of the board of the society during the early years of the century and who were especially active in promoting its work were: Mrs. John B. Elam, Mrs. Hugh H. Hanna, Mrs. John Kern, Mrs. John H. Byers, Mrs. Charles Schurmann, Mrs. H. S. Tucker, Mrs. Louis Levey, Mrs. G. A. Schnull, Mrs. Robert Aley, Mrs. Meredith Nicholson, Mrs. John O. Henderson, Mrs. W. W. Crichtlow, Mrs. Eddy M. Campbell, Mrs. Theodore A. Randall, Mrs. William E. Hayward, Mrs. Ferdinand Mayer, Mrs. J. H. Taylor, Mrs. Herman Munk, and Mrs. William E. English.

The tax support provided under the law of 1901 fell short of meeting the needs of the expanding kindergarten program, and efforts to secure additional tax money continued. In 1911 the board of trustees of the Free Kindergarten Society helped to secure new legislation. The petition which the society presented to the legislature asserted: "The wise care of little chil-

dren is a matter vital to the State's welfare; it is a false economy to neglect the child in its earlier years, and later to expend large sums for reforming evil habits that might have been prevented." The petitioners also stressed the fact that the increase in the foreign population of Indianapolis placed greater demands upon the kindergartens in order that they might be able "to give the children of these families at the earliest possible moment habits and ideas that will tend to develop good American citizenship." The legislature responded to this appeal by amending the kindergarten law so as to make possible a doubling of the tax levy.

The income from taxes continued to be supplemented by private donations. As before the ladies of the Kindergarten Society solicited gifts and raised money through social affairs. The most spectacular affairs were the annual play fests, which were begun in 1903 and continued for more than twenty years. At first they were held in Tomlinson Hall, an auditorium in downtown Indianapolis, but after a few years they were moved to the coliseum at the Indiana State Fairgrounds. Thousands of children, parents, and friends attended these affairs. Patrons bought seats and boxes and refreshments to swell the funds of the society. Some businessmen contributed merchandise which could be sold, while others contributed cloth out of which garments were made for the children participating in the festival. The bands which played for the marching and dancing contributed their services. Even the streetcar company gave free transportation to the children. The ceremonies always began with a thousand or more small folk from all of the kindergartens of the city marching into the coliseum to the music of the band. Thereafter the children marched, danced, sang songs, and played games to the delight of the adult spectators. A newspaper account of the 1909 play fest said: "There were black children and white, Americans, Hungarians, Syrians, Italians, and many others. Some of the little foreigners

could neither speak nor understand English and yet they went through their parts well, for it is their custom at the kindergartens to follow the example of the children who can understand.”³

In later years Mrs. Lois Hufford praised Mrs. Blaker's capacity for leadership and organization in connection with the play fests, but most of all she lauded her ability to bring all groups in the community together in these affairs. “With infinite tact, disregarding racial differences and whatever social barriers might exist, she harmonized the various elements into perfect co-operation,” said Mrs. Hufford.⁴

Until 1913 the teachers college remained under the direction of the board of the Free Kindergarten Society; that year it was decided that it should be incorporated separately and have a separate board of trustees. On October 27, 1913, the Teachers College of Indianapolis was incorporated. The first board of trustees included the following persons chosen for life terms: Mrs. John B. Elam, Mrs. Lois G. Hufford, Mrs. H. S. Tucker, Mrs. Charles F. Sayles, Mrs. Meredith Nicholson, Mrs. W. W. Crichtlow, and Mrs. Eliza A. Blaker. Mrs. Blaker was also designated permanent president of the college. She continued to hold the position of superintendent of the kindergartens, and the two organizations continued to work in close co-operation. The kindergartens were taught by graduates or students of the college, and faculty and students of the college did much of the work connected with the social activities of the kindergartens, including the play fests.

In 1907 when the Indiana law for the first time made some professional training a prerequisite for teaching in any public school in the state, the Indianapolis Teachers College had been placed on the list of normal schools accredited by the Indiana State Board of Education for teacher training. In 1921 it was recognized by the state as a Standard Normal School, and in 1922 it was accredited for the giving of extension courses. The

enrollment of the college and the scope of its offerings increased over the years. Most of the students continued to enroll in two-year courses which led to diplomas and licenses in kindergarten, primary, and intermediate teaching, or special teaching licenses in public school music, public school art, or domestic science. A three-year course for training kindergarten supervisors was also given. Later a four-year course was instituted, and the first Bachelor of Pedagogy degree was granted in 1917.

The enrollment of the college increased until in 1925-26, the last year of Mrs. Blaker's life, it had grown to 1,442. In 1926 diplomas or degrees were awarded to 318 persons. During Mrs. Blaker's lifetime a total of about twenty thousand students were enrolled in the school.

The increase in enrollment made the Jackson Building, which had at first seemed commodious, inadequate. In 1915 through the generosity of Mrs. Charles F. Sayles, one of the incorporators of the college, who donated twenty-five thousand dollars, an annex was added to the Jackson Building. It was known as the Armenia B. Tuttle Addition in memory of Mrs. Sayles's mother. It contained additional classrooms, a dining room, cafeteria, and kitchen. The addition made it possible for all the students who wished to do so to eat their meals together in the college dining hall. The top floor of the building was for some years used as a dormitory for part of the students. It was named in honor of Dr. Harriet Turner, the physician who was for many years a member of the faculty of the college. It was furnished through the efforts of Mrs. G. A. Schnull who selected the furnishings and made herself personally responsible for the payment of the bills. In the Tuttle Memorial were also the rooms that were used for a model elementary school and kindergarten in which the college students did practice teaching.

After a few years a further increase in enrollment made additional space necessary. In 1922 a one-story building for

the model school was built. At this time another lot adjacent to the school was acquired which was used as a playground and also for gardens which were planted by the students in domestic science and botany. A further upsurge in enrollment in 1922 and 1923 made it necessary to vacate the dormitory and to use the space for classrooms. Classes became so crowded that the school rented a church in the neighborhood for classes during the summer sessions. In 1924 in order to relieve some of the congestion a double house on a lot to the north of the campus was bought. Thereafter the model kindergarten was held in one half of this building, while Mrs. Blaker made her home in the other half during the last years of her life.

Throughout these years of growth the college remained unique among the schools of higher learning in Indiana so far as its finances were concerned. It was the only school which received support from neither state nor city nor from any religious organization. In spite of the fact that its financial assets grew slowly they grew steadily, although the school operated throughout its entire history without an endowment comparable to that of most private colleges. Every year increased efforts were made to raise money, and strict economy was always necessary to keep the school operating within its income. After 1919, in order to meet the requirements prescribed by the State Teachers Training Board for standard normal schools, the school was required to have an annual net income of fifteen thousand dollars or more beyond outstanding bills and expenditures. This requirement was made of schools which did not have a productive endowment of at least three hundred thousand dollars, the purpose being to create a reserve fund for expansion and development purposes.

The funds for the school were derived from various sources. The most important was the tuition paid by the college students. In addition there were smaller amounts from the fees paid by the pupils in the Jackson Kindergarten and the model

school. There was also some profit from the college dining-room. Smaller sums were realized by fairs and other money-making activities sponsored by the college. Mrs. Blaker familiarized herself with every detail of the finances, and everyone associated with the school agreed that without her astute management and thrift the college could not have operated on its limited income.

The building of an endowment fund was always one of the president's goals, and several endowment campaigns were attempted, but none was entirely successful. Mrs. Blaker herself was indefatigable in her efforts at raising funds. She spoke constantly before all sorts of civic groups in an effort to inform the people of Indianapolis of the work of the college and of its services to the cause of education in the city and the state. She often made personal appeals to businessmen of the city. She nearly always met with a friendly response, and many contributions were forthcoming, but they were always relatively small. The college was never the recipient of any really large gift or bequest. Nevertheless, at the time of Mrs. Blaker's death the physical plant of the school had an appraised value of more than one quarter of a million dollars, and the school was free from debt.

In raising the funds for the school Mrs. Blaker had the support of the faculty, the students, and alumnae of the college, as well as the support of the civic-minded women and men who served on the board of trustees and on the advisory board. In 1914, when a drive for an endowment fund was in progress, Mrs. Blaker reported: "Every class in this school is working for the Endowment, and this is true of each individual member of the school, both of the students and the faculty. To earn money for the Endowment, one student is manicuring; another is washing hair; another is developing picture films; another is making candy; two are to give a Children's Party; three others are responsible for a lecture that is to be given here; and

another group is going to give an evening of roller skating." Even William, the college janitor, had given an oyster stew, which had earned seven dollars for the fund.⁵

While such activities added few dollars to the endowment fund, they testify to the loyalty and enthusiasm of those connected with the school. Over a period of years the alumnae raised over twelve thousand dollars which were invested for the benefit of the school.

Invaluable support in the form of financial contributions and other aid was given by the women on the board of trustees. Although the college and the Free Kindergarten Society were incorporated separately after 1913, in general it was the same group of women who supported both organizations, and the personnel of the two boards was almost identical. After the separation Mrs. Charles F. Sayles became president of the board of the college and held that position until 1919. As already mentioned it was during her tenure and largely through her generosity that the Tuttle Memorial annex was built. In 1919 Mrs. Meredith Nicholson held the presidency. In 1920 Mrs. Evans Woollen accepted the office and held it until the college became affiliated with Butler University. Other women who served as officers or as members of the board of the college were: Mrs. H. S. Tucker, Mrs. Clemens Vonnegut, Mrs. John H. Byers, Mrs. Albert Metzger, Mrs. John O. Henderson, Mrs. G. A. Schnull, Mrs. Eddy M. Campbell, Mrs. W. W. Crichtlow, Mrs. Samuel Fletcher, Mrs. George Haerle, Mrs. John W. Kern, Mrs. Frank Morrison, Mrs. Ferdinand Mayer, Mrs. Herman Munk, Mrs. J. H. Taylor, Mrs. Horace Wood, Mrs. George Mueller, Mrs. W. W. Winslow, Mrs. Hilton U. Brown, and Miss May Louise Shipp.

In addition to the board of trustees there was an advisory board of men. Among those who served in this capacity were: William H. H. Miller, Calvin N. Kendall, John P. Frenzel, Alexander C. Ayres, Thomas H. Spann, Louis Levey, Frederic

M. Ayres, John N. Carey, Charles E. Coffin, Charles W. Fairbanks, Albert Metzger, G. A. Schnull, Warren Simmons, Thomas Taggart, Clemens Vonnegut, Lucius B. Swift, Evans Woollen, Alfred Potts, Henry M. Dowling, Louis C. Huesman, the Reverend Harry Blunt, the Reverend E. W. Clippinger, and the Reverend O. D. Odell.

These persons were drawn from many of the most respected and influential families of the city. The men on the advisory board and the husbands of the women on the board of trustees were prominent in business and financial and professional circles. Several of them were also political leaders. For example, Mrs. John W. Kern, who was one of the women most active in support of both the kindergartens and the college, was the wife of a Democratic candidate for the vice-presidency of the United States, while Mrs. John H. Holliday's husband was prominent in Republican circles. Thomas Taggart, who was a power in the Democratic Party in both the state and the nation, was a warm friend of the school who performed numerous services for it in addition to giving it financial support. Charles W. Fairbanks, a Republican, who was Vice-President of the United States during the presidency of Theodore Roosevelt, was also a member of the advisory board, although he does not appear to have been particularly active.

The students who attended the Blaker school were drawn from all over Indiana, and a few were from other states. Occasionally a student from a foreign country was enrolled. Most of the students were young girls who had recently graduated from high school, but they came from varied backgrounds. Some of them were girls from poor families, who had to earn their own expenses. Mrs. Blaker frequently declared that hers was a "bread and butter school," and lack of money never prevented a girl whom she regarded as worthy from attending. Help in one form or another—scholarships, opportunities for employment, or other financial assistance—was always forth-

coming. Mrs. Blaker had a "private purse," made up of her own contributions supplemented by gifts from other friends which helped many girls who would otherwise have been unable to attend college. On the other hand, many of the girls came from homes of moderate wealth. Parents who did not expect that their daughters would need to earn a living sent them to Mrs. Blaker's because they knew that under her direction they would receive training that would equip them to be well-rounded women and happy wives and mothers.

Regardless of the background from which the girls came they were subjected to a course of training that was calculated to instill in them a broad understanding of human problems, particularly the problems of those financially less fortunate than themselves, and respect for all kinds of work. The acid test of whether or not a young woman was fit to be a teacher of young children was her attitude toward children—all children, white or black, American or foreign born, clean or dirty. All of the college students were required to work in the nurseries which the Kindergarten Society maintained and to visit the homes in the kindergarten districts as well as do practice teaching and help in the social activities connected with the kindergartens. Many of the young ladies at first found such tasks as bathing dirty children and changing diapers repugnant, and they recoiled from the sights which met them in the homes which they visited. But as they began to understand Mrs. Blaker's motives in requiring them to do these things, their attitude changed. They learned to take pride in their work and to share her respect for all kinds of work and her desire to help the underprivileged.

The president's personality pervaded every part of life at the college, and religion was a part of the college, just as it was a part of Mrs. Blaker. Daily chapel exercises were opened with the Lord's Prayer or a reading from the Psalms. There was also silent prayer before dinner in the college dining hall. At

the chapel exercises prayer was followed by a talk by Mrs. Blaker. Her subject might be religious, moral, or literary, or she might be concerned with such matters as diction or dress or deportment. But whatever her talk, it left an indelible impression upon her listeners. Among her greatest personal assets were her beautiful voice and her ability as a speaker. To the girls she emphasized the effect of the teacher's voice in influencing others. She spent much time in teaching them correct diction and pronunciation.

Mrs. Blaker also took an interest in the dress and deportment of the students. "Mrs. Blaker's" girls were expected to be ladies in every sense of the word. Although she herself was far from prudish and saw to it that her girls developed an awareness of the realities of all aspects of life, she retained Victorian ideas of modesty and decorum. Severely simple dress, including black stockings, was required of girls who visited in the kindergarten districts, and the wearing of jewelry was forbidden on these visits. Wearing a too sheer blouse to chapel or appearing downtown without gloves might bring a personal rebuke from the president herself. After the advent of bobbed hair girls who succumbed to the new style were required to keep their locks confined in nets while on campus or teaching. Even in the twenties dresses shorter than twelve inches from the floor were forbidden.

But such concepts of propriety did not in any way prevent the college girls from having a full and varied social life. There was an abundance of social activity for both students and faculty. Every holiday, such as St. Valentine's or Halloween, was the occasion for a large party, and in addition there were many smaller parties. At least once every year the faculty and students joined in producing an operetta or play, an activity which provided fun as well as valuable experience and a few needed dollars for school projects. Another event in which everyone connected with the school participated was



Two Views of an Austro-Hungarian Kindergarten Class, about 1914



Syrian Children at Mayer Chapel Kindergarten, 1910



Playing with Blocks

the annual fair, held in the assembly hall. The decorations for the fairs, which were made by the handicraft classes, were one of the outstanding features. Frequently a floral theme was followed, as in the Poinsettia Fair, or the Wisteria Fair. Another year it was a Mother Goose Fair, at which the college girls in costumes representing Mother Goose characters sold their fares in booths representing such places as Mother Hubbard's Cupboard (apparently not bare on this occasion) and a Gingerbread House. The fairs also featured such entertainment as magicians and puppet shows.

There were many events connected with the commencement season, including a class play, class day exercises, an alumnae reception, and the baccalaureate sermon. The ceremonies at the graduation exercises came to follow a traditional pattern. The ceremonies were held for a time in the assembly hall of the Jackson Building, later in a larger auditorium. Beginning in 1903 the graduates wore collegiate caps and gowns. Representatives of the Junior Class, dressed in white, formed an aisle through which the graduates marched. The leaders of the procession carried flags—the Stars and Stripes of the United States, the Indiana State banner, and the flag of the school, a green and white banner on which were the words, “Mehr Licht” (“More Light”), the motto of the school. There was always a speaker from outside the college, frequently the president of one of the other Indiana colleges or a prominent clergyman, but Mrs. Blaker also always addressed the girls. At the beginning of the exercises the “Teachers College Song of Praise,” written by Miss Emma Colbert, was sung, and “A Hymn of Child Welfare” was sung just before the benediction.

There were a great many clubs and activities connected with the academic life of the school—a Glee Club, a Scribblers' Club, a school newspaper called at first “The News Letter” and later “T. C. I. Collegiate,” and others. The Froebel Club, a branch of the International Kindergarten Union, had been

organized by the alumnae soon after the founding. Later the Middendorf Club was formed by colored graduates and former students.

In spite of the variety of opportunities for social activities which all of these groups offered, there was a movement to establish Greek letter sororities soon after the college moved to its permanent campus. Mrs. Blaker was reluctant to permit such groups. She felt that they would inevitably impair the spirit of unity among the college girls and perhaps create discord. No matter how generous the rules regarding membership she feared that heartaches and personal enmities might result. In spite of her misgivings she permitted the formation of several Greek letter groups but only under conditions which she imposed. She herself was elected to honorary membership in each sorority so that there could be no secrets from her! Each group was also required to have faculty members and to submit to other regulations. Moreover, a girl who was a member of a sorority was not regarded as eligible for scholarship aid. In spite of all these precautions some dissension developed, and in 1915 the Board of Trustees of the college voted that Greek letter groups must disband. Pressure from the students led to their re-establishment in 1924 under the rules of the Pan-Hellenic Association.

As long as Mrs. Blaker lived the college was a very feminine institution. She believed that women were better equipped than men for the teaching of small children. All the regular students were women, although a few men were sometimes admitted as auditors. All of the full-time faculty members were women, while special courses and lectures were frequently given by men.

Among the faculty members the oldest in point of service was Lois Hufford, who had been one of the founders of the Free Kindergarten Society and who continued to teach English literature at the college. Another figure who was associated

with the school from its earliest days was Dr. Harriet E. Turner, a medical doctor, who taught courses in physiology and hygiene until her death in 1914. She was a pioneer in the field of health education, particularly in the teaching of the prevention of disease. Two other early faculty members who were outstanding in kindergarten work were Caroline Bright Armstrong and Jessie M. Goodwin. Later Stella A. McCarty served on the faculty of the college and was assistant superintendent of the kindergartens. Laura Barney Royse, who acted as supervisor of the kindergartens, was also one of Mrs. Blaker's closest friends. Charlotte E. P. Gardner, who taught psychology and pedagogics, was associated with the school both before and after its move to the Alabama Street location. Julia Harrison Moore taught history and civics for a number of years and became one of Mrs. Blaker's closest friends. In the field of domestic science was one of the most beloved members of the faculty, Mrs. Blanche E. Chenoweth, who taught courses in costume design and textiles. Several other members of the faculty were themselves graduates of the college. Among these were Helen Wallick in domestic science, Anna L. Fern in domestic science and manual arts, Ruth Patterson in kindergarten methods, and Rubie F. Stapp in the art of story telling.⁶

Two members of the staff deserve special mention because of their services to the school and because of the unusual esteem in which they were held by both Mrs. Blaker and the students. The first was Miss Emma Colbert, who joined the faculty in 1907 as instructor in principles and methods of teaching. She had previously had extensive experience in elementary education and was brought to the staff to strengthen this department since Mrs. Blaker was primarily a kindergartner. In 1917 Miss Colbert became dean of the college, a post she retained until the Blaker school was affiliated with Butler University. After the union of the two schools she served as Assistant Dean of Educa-

tion until her retirement in 1940. The Blaker girls found her a spirited and delightful teacher and a friendly counselor. More than any one else on the staff she was Mrs. Blaker's *alter ego*. She filled many speaking engagements and represented the college in many capacities in addition to teaching. She bore a large share of the administrative burden of the school and showed a remarkable aptitude for pouring oil on troubled waters and harmonizing strained relationships. Mrs. Blaker relied on her more heavily than upon any other person in the school, and during the last years of Mrs. Blaker's life she carried on more and more of the work of directing the college.

The second, Blanche Gasaway Mathews, first came to the college as a student and later returned to teach domestic science. Her greatest talents lay in a different field. After a few years she became registrar of the college, a position which she retained after the affiliation with Butler. In this capacity she showed unusual business and organizational ability. She and her husband, who was engaged in the insurance business, were among the Blakers' closest friends.

Faculty meetings, at which Mrs. Blaker presided, were held every week. Occasionally an entire half day on Saturday would be devoted to a discussion of administrative and educational problems. In 1916 the teachers formed a permanent organization called "The Faculty Organization of the Teachers College of Indianapolis," to which all full-time faculty members belonged. The staff and student body of the college were always small enough that close personal relationships were maintained. Mrs. Blaker regarded her staff as her friends and took a sincere interest in their individual problems, although she had no prying curiosity in their affairs. She also had a warm interest in the students, and they in turn adored her, although they stood in awe of her. The close relationship between teachers and students led to the formation of friendships which lasted long after the girls had left school. Outside

the classroom the faculty members served not only as chaperons but also participated in many extracurricular affairs with as much enthusiasm as the students.

In addition to the classes taught by the regular faculty members there were every year special courses taught by outsiders. For several years, for example, Dr. Stanley Coulter, dean of the School of Science of Purdue University, gave a special course in biology, while George Tapy of Wabash College gave special work in psychology. There was also a series of lectures each year by persons outside the regular faculty. Their subjects covered a wide range. In 1914, for example, one of the outstanding events was William Lowe Bryan's lecture on Nietzsche. That same year the well-known Indianapolis author, Meredith Nicholson, whose wife was one of the most active trustees of the college, gave a lecture on John Milton.

Mrs. Blaker believed whole-heartedly in the Froebelian system of education, and in general the educational theories and methods taught at the college were in accord with that system. She herself taught courses in educational psychology and child psychology which were strongly tinged with Froebelian theories. However, she was not a blind adherent of any one system. Neither was she an educational faddist who tried every educational innovation which came along. She sought to adapt all theories and systems to the needs of the community in which she worked. For a few years she was deeply interested in the educational theories of Dr. Marie Montessori, an Italian physician and psychologist, who had founded a system for the education of children which created a mild sensation in educational circles. Dr. Montessori's first great success was in the teaching of defective children. Later she sought to transfer some of the methods which had proved successful in this work to the teaching of normal children. Although her system had much in common with that of Froebel, there were important differences. In the Froebelian kindergarten, although indi-

vidual differences were recognized, there was emphasis on group activity, whereas in the Montessori system the instruction was almost entirely individual. About 1912 Mrs. Blaker decided to introduce some features of the Montessori system into her college and the Indianapolis kindergartens. Courses in the system were taught in the Indianapolis Teachers College for several years, but, although she continued to admire the system, Mrs. Blaker finally decided that it was not adapted to the teacher training program in Indiana, and about 1922 it was abandoned.

Regardless of the system which was taught, one of the most important things which Mrs. Blaker's students gained was an awareness of the fact that each child was entirely different from all others. Mrs. Blaker frequently repeated Froebel's phrase that every child was the "peculiar idea of God," and would add with a twinkle, "and some of them are very peculiar." She made her students understand that a child has a personality and world of its own which parents and teachers must attempt to understand. She was one of the first persons in Indiana to teach a naturalistic, behavioristic psychology. All students were required to spend much time in observing children in actual play and learning situations and to work out methods of dealing with these situations.

In addition to the regular program for the training of kindergartners and public school teachers the college offered several courses for special groups who were dealing with children in other capacities. Among these were classes for mothers and nurses and governesses and classes for Sunday School teachers. These last were the first classes of this sort which were offered in the Middle West and were one of Mrs. Blaker's special interests. The classes, which she taught herself, included study of child psychology and lectures on the use of Bible stories which had a moral value. Mrs. Blaker also gave many talks before other Sunday School groups. She urged

Sunday School teachers to study the Bible and other religious literature carefully and prayerfully, but also to study the children whom they taught.

Besides her work in Indianapolis Mrs. Blaker gave her time and energy to help organize kindergartens in other cities in Indiana. In addition to those mentioned already, the kindergarten systems in Terre Haute, Anderson, Muncie, Winchester, Vincennes, South Bend, Fort Wayne, Elkhart, and Columbus were organized in part through her efforts.

Mrs. Blaker also was an active participant in many educational and civic groups. For several years she served as president of the Psychology and Educational Section of the Indiana State Teachers Association. In this capacity she gave numerous lectures on child psychology to groups of teachers and parents throughout the state. She participated in the work of the International Kindergarten Union, in which she was a recognized leader. She was interested in all community activities which promoted child welfare and took a leading part in several of them. She served as a member of the Education Committee of the Indianapolis Chamber of Commerce and was active on the Board of Children's Guardians, the Indianapolis Orphans Home, the Juvenile Court, the Jewish Community Center, and Flanner House, a social service center for Negroes.

Other civic enterprises claimed some of her time. She was one of the founders of the Indianapolis Council of Women and served as its president in 1901-1902. In 1913, when Indianapolis was devastated by the worst flood in its history, she was made chairman of the Women's Committee for the Relief of Flood Sufferers, which was appointed by the mayor. During the First World War she served on several local committees connected with the war effort and made the services of the college available for promoting national defense. The first Red Cross War Kitchen in the United States was opened in the domestic science kitchen of the Teachers College. Faculty

and students of the school were active in the Red Cross food conservation program, teaching the women of the city about methods of conserving food and using food substitutes.

Over the years the integrated program of the kindergartens and the college exerted an ever-increasing influence, and Mrs. Blaker came to be regarded by the people of Indianapolis as a symbol of child welfare and teacher training activities. The reputation of her work spread far beyond the borders of Indiana. For example, when Mr. Chin Chang Chen, a professor of literature and history, came from Peking, China, to the United States in order to learn about teaching methods, he was advised at Teachers College, Columbia University, to come to Indianapolis to observe the work at the Blaker college. In 1920 he studied at the school for several months and received special training to help him in setting up a normal school curriculum in China. Another Chinese student, Helen Gwoh, attended the Indianapolis Teachers College and later Columbia and Yale universities before returning to China to promote the kindergarten movement. After her return to her native country Miss Gwoh wrote of her gratitude for the inspiration she had received from her association with Mrs. Blaker. In speaking of what she had gained in the Indianapolis school she said: "Above all is the great influence and inspiration of our President Blaker—Mother and Friend, whose heart is love, whose care is service, and whose soul possesses vision; and who taught us hope, faith, and courage."⁷

Many observers thought that as the result of the training which they received under her tutelage "Mrs. Blaker's girls" were imbued with a more vital concept of teaching than that received in most training schools. W. E. Winship, editor of the *Journal of Education*, a leading professional publication, who visited most of the teacher training institutions in the United States, spoke of the distinctive atmosphere of the school and the unlikeness of Blaker college to state-supported

teacher training schools. He commented upon the fact that the school "without an endowment, without wealthy patrons to come to its rescue, without state or city appropriation" was nevertheless growing in a period when some schools were having difficulty in recruiting teacher training candidates. At the Blaker college he found that "young women learn the art of successful teaching and get a spirit of ardent devotion to the profession of teaching." The peculiar spirit of the school he attributed to Mrs. Blaker and to the fact that the work of the college was integrated with the kindergartens. He remarked: "A notable distinction between this and every other teacher preparation we know is the mission spirit kept aglow, through the connection of the college with 4,000 little people in the forty-five free kindergartens reaching every section of the city into which the population from the South or overseas comes. This free kindergarten work, unequalled in quantity and quality in any other city in the world, is the creation and evolution of Mrs. Blaker, who has the backing of the most eminent men and women of the city. . . .

"There is nothing perfunctory, stilted, or merely theoretical in it all. Mrs. Blaker, the faculty, the students, and everyone associated with her in the work of the college or the forty-five substations for Americanizing every nook and corner of the rapidly growing city have a vision of thrill of service rather than a drill for a job."⁸

A letter written shortly before Mrs. Blaker's death by a graduate who was teaching in Cleveland, Ohio, was another expression of the conviction that Blaker students received something of more lasting value than mere training in pedagogical methods. "Tell her (Mrs. Blaker)," the letter said, "that the type of training she gives her girls is the only thing that endures in this day of trial and error that the educational world is passing through. The poise, the common sense, the vision that comes as a part of the training there is indispensable

in this educational tumult. Every day I am most thankful to have had such a foundation as she gives."⁹

While for forty years the Blaker college was engaged in training kindergarten and elementary schoolteachers, another Indianapolis institution, Butler University, had been engaged in training secondary schoolteachers. Relations between the two schools had always been friendly, and a degree of comity existed for a number of years. For example, teachers from the Blaker school had gone to the Butler campus to give training in kindergarten methods to students in the department of religion who were preparing to do missionary work. During the last years of her life Mrs. Blaker decided that the future of her school could best be assured and the community of Indianapolis best served by incorporating the teachers college into the university. With that objective she entered into an affiliation between her college and Butler University in June, 1926, a few months before her death. Under the terms of the agreement if there were students at Butler seeking elementary teacher training, they would be sent to the teachers college, while her school would send to Butler any students who wished to prepare for high school teaching or administration. Each institution was to maintain its own identity but each was to recognize the work of the other and to give credit for courses taken at the other. This affiliation would enable the two schools to cover the entire field of teacher training and to eliminate competition between them.

After Mrs. Blaker's death in December, 1926, the Indianapolis Teachers College continued for a time as an independent institution. However, without its guiding spirit the school entered upon troublous times. Declining enrollments and increasing costs of operation caused the Board of Trustees of the Teachers College to decide to transfer the property and control of the school to Butler University. The transfer was effected in 1930. After the school became a part of Butler University

Years of Progress

training in kindergarten and elementary work continued to be given at the campus on Alabama Street until June, 1933. At that time the buildings were vacated, and the college was moved to the Butler campus. There its work was carried on in the Elementary Department of the College of Education.

IV

PHILOSOPHY AND PERSONAL LIFE

IN SEEKING TO UNDERSTAND Eliza Blaker and her philosophy of life and education one must recognize first of all that she was a deeply religious person. Her educational philosophy was grounded on the teachings of Jesus of Nazareth. She would no more have questioned the existence of an omnipotent, loving God than she would have questioned her own existence. Her faith in the Divine Power was unswerving, and she was without self-consciousness in expressing that faith. The strength of her faith was such that it sometimes caused students and other associates to change from doubting to belief. Throughout her life she leaned on her God and prayed to Him for guidance and strength.

But although she was religious, she was not narrowly sectarian. She was not concerned with dogmas and theology. To her religion was a way of life. As Professor George Tapy of Wabash College, who knew her well, said: "She was not a woman of small pieties, but the divine flame was in her heart."

After Mrs. Blaker's death one of her early students wrote: "I am probably the only one of her children who is a Catholic nun. . . . It is an illustration of her breadth of viewpoint that she was sympathetically interested in my becoming a Catholic,

which event occurred during the two years I was under her care."¹

To Eliza Blaker, Jesus was the greatest of teachers, the Bible the greatest textbook. Her theories regarding the teaching of children were founded on Jesus' concepts of children. She declared: "The emancipation of children and glorification of childhood began with the command: 'Suffer little children and forbid them not to come unto me: for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven.'

"The Man of Nazareth gave a *new* meaning to child life. Wherever his spirit and word have taken hold of the thoughts and affections of men, a peculiar sanctity has gathered about childhood."²

The following extract from her address to the graduating class of the Indianapolis Teachers College in 1912 is a typical expression of a favorite theme:

"Keep ever before you the model of the most noted Teacher the world has ever known—a Teacher whose influence grows greater as the centuries pass. Study His principles. Consider His sympathy, justice, simplicity and His enthusiasm for teaching. He always understood the needs of His hearers and drew His illustrations from their immediate neighborhood. . . . A study of Jesus, the Teacher, will always uplift and inspire."

In 1925 she told another graduating class: "Every line of activity needs a model. The Man of Nazareth is the model teacher of the world. . . . Read His life, His Sermon on the Mount. Seek the secret of His teaching power."

Her belief that the role of the teacher was essentially a religious one and that the most important part of education was character training was clearly set forth in one of her earliest commencement addresses, the date of which is unknown. She asserted that the diploma which each graduate received was a symbol of the belief in the vital necessity of the

early training of little children and added: "It is also the sign of a special religious creed that every true kindergartner espouses—namely, that it is the destiny of each human being to reveal the divinity that is within him—the God likeness, the power of good and for the useful. . . .

"With all the work that you do in leading the children to lives of industry and good citizenship do not fail to make your ultimate purpose character forming with the central thought of leading the children to implicit trust in God.

"At the close of each day's work ask yourselves the question—What have I done in the Master's Vineyard today? Is the life of any child brighter for my labor? It is only by constant study and by work and prayer that any good is accomplished, and this is particularly true in the teaching profession."

It was no doubt because his educational philosophy, with its emphasis on a loving God and the divine nature of the child, was essentially religious that Eliza Blaker was first attracted to the teachings and methods of Friedrich Froebel. Throughout her long career in education she adhered more closely to his system in the kindergartens and in the training school than any other. She frequently used the language of Froebel in describing the child, and like him she emphasized the vital importance of early training. The child she declared, "is a promise, a human bud," who must be sympathetically studied in order to determine his interests and needs. In an early report, written a few years after she came to Indianapolis, she said: "The first period of childhood is the most important in human development, whether we refer to physical, mental, moral or religious growth. This truth finds its recognition in the well devised system of education termed the Kindergarten. Here the child is trained in habits of self-control, industry and considerateness for others. His powers are gradually unfolded; his desire for companionship satisfied, and his thoughts turn to the Giver of all good."³

Like Froebel she believed that no child was inherently bad: "I believe thoroughly, truly, that every boy and girl could be saved if the right course in prevention or reformation was pursued. Prevention is the greater safeguard, but if the child has not been prevented from gaining wrong habits, let us take the next best step, and work for and believe in reformation."⁴

Because the child contained the divine spark, child training must consist of something more than mere attention to the physical need and desires. The right kind of training involved character training. In another early report Mrs. Blaker said: "The child is a reasonable being, bearing the stamp of our Father's highest creation—mind, and as such demands more than the mere satisfaction of his bodily needs.

"Our work has for its aim the harmonious growth of both body and soul; the present well being and happiness of the child; his preparation for home and school life and for future citizenship. This involves clean and healthful conditions, the inculcation of correct desires and right action—the formation of a true and noble character.

"The Kindergarten is not alone a place for 'pretty plays.' It is a soul school to which the child comes from his mother's arms or from a home devoid of mother love to a new world—to a home of sunshine in which he is surrounded by wholesome influences.

"Love is the controlling law and the child early learns to respond to it. He is taught to cherish kindly feelings for his companions, to cultivate an unselfish disposition, and to act upon these sentiments in his duty toward his playmates. Thus he begins early to practice the Golden Rule and to form those habits that will make him a blessing to his family and the community."⁵

As a disciple of Froebel Mrs. Blaker stressed the importance of the child as a part of nature and of the need to utilize and encourage rather than to repress his natural instincts

in his early training. The primary function of education was to permit the manifestation of self-activity and to provide suitable means for creative self-activity. The secondary function was to correct errors that were the outgrowth of the child's earlier experience. Like Froebel she emphasized that the small child was interested in play: "It is his work. It is the setting, the framework of his activities." His training should utilize the love of play and fondness for games. Likewise the training program should recognize the child's imaginative qualities and his imitative powers and utilize them.

Mrs. Blaker was sharply critical of traditional ideas concerning child training and discipline. She declared that the old idea of a school had been a monarchy, whereas a school-room should be a republic in which children learned self-government. She deplored the old attitudes which equated "goodness" with repression and which had the effect of annihilating many of the child's natural qualities. She was firmly opposed to corporal punishment and considered it unnecessary if the person in charge really understood the child. She asserted: "Corporal punishment brutalizes the child; it breaks the spirit. It brings a rational being to the level of a brute. It is an appeal to the body and not to the higher nature." Instead of inflicting physical punishment she urged the teacher or parent to look for the cause of wrong doing and then to seek a cure. Above all she urged patience, admitting that, "It may be necessary to try many, many plans before the cure can be found."

Although an advocate of permitting the child to develop naturally, Mrs. Blaker constantly repeated that freedom was not license, and she put almost as much emphasis upon self-control as upon self-expression. One of the most important functions of the kindergarten was to train the child in habits of self-control and consideration for others. This was stressed in an early report which said: "With the basic thought that the



Alumni of No. 4 Kindergarten, Aged 7-15 Years, 1909



Arabella C. Peelle Domestic Training School



Mr. and Mrs. Blaker, about 1911



Indianapolis Teachers College, Alabama at 21st Street

formation of right habits is the most important issue and all other development is secondary, the Kindergarten stands as the preparatory institution to the school and future life activities.

“Moral power is attained only through the constant repetition of right doing. Each attempt to conform to law aids in the formation of a good habit. Every manifestation of the child must be studied and self-control nourished and strengthened.”⁶

Because she considered a child's earliest years of greatest significance in determining his adult character and personality, Mrs. Blaker considered parenthood, and especially motherhood, the most important role in the world. Although many institutions helped to shape the child, the influence of the home was greater than any other. Schools could only supplement home training. For these reasons she sought to develop cooperation between home and school. The various mothers' groups already mentioned were an integral part of the kindergarten program. In later years Mrs. Blaker was a strong advocate of parent-teacher organizations to create a partnership between the home and the public school. She spoke frequently before groups of parents and sought to impress upon them that they, even more than the school, had a responsibility in the training of children. She urged parents to study their children, to understand their needs, “to *live* with their children,” in order to help them. At the same time she counseled against parental interference which might have the effect of hindering natural development.

Next to motherhood she regarded teaching as the highest profession and frequently compared the role of the teacher with that of a mother. “The real teacher's life, like a true mother's, is one of self-sacrifice, of patience and sympathetic interest, and a constant study of the unfolding child.”

This study of the unfolding child she regarded as one of the most important qualifications of the teacher. One of the most significant features of the teacher training program

which Mrs. Blaker developed was its emphasis upon the study of modern theories of child psychology which took a functional view of the child. But along with the stress which she laid upon training in psychology, Eliza Blaker believed that schooling was second to character and personality as qualifications for good teaching. Since the work of the teacher was to "nourish the divine nature of the child," a teacher must possess spiritual and moral qualities of a higher order. She must love children and have a genuine desire to be of service. Only those who possessed what she called "the great mother heart" would, in her opinion, make successful teachers.

A group of teachers of the faculty of the Indianapolis Teachers College in speaking of Mrs. Blaker agreed: "Never for a moment did the purely 'professional' attitude, however richly accompanied by professional accomplishment or experience appeal to her. She valued . . . training and learning, but unless these revealed a soul alive to ideals and a heart pulsing with sympathy and a mind full of understanding, they were but leaves, without fruit, in her estimation."⁷

Since the learning process in small children was largely one of imitation, Mrs. Blaker frequently stressed the fact that teachers and parents were examples, whether consciously or not. Children, she said, were more in need of models than critics. Moreover, in her opinion, a teacher could not continue to be a successful model unless she herself continued to learn. She remarked that "she who fails to be a learner fails to be a teacher." No matter how much knowledge a person acquired she should retain the student attitude of mind.

As a teacher herself Mrs. Blaker exemplified the qualities which she sought to develop in others. She sometimes said, "We become old when we cease to learn." She herself never became old in this sense, for her intellectual interests remained keen and varied. Although she never made a display of her learning, she kept abreast of all the latest developments in her

special field, psychology, a subject in which there were almost revolutionary developments during her years of teaching. She also derived much pleasure from reading in the fields of literature and history, and she displayed a continuing interest in current affairs. She could and did converse with ease with distinguished scholars in a number of fields. But in spite of her own love of learning and her respect for learning, she regarded the important things in life as the simple things. Modest where her own intellectual attainments were concerned, she had little sympathy with persons who made a display of erudition and attempted to appear profound by being abstruse.

Most important of all, she was no mere educational theorist. To her *practice* was always more important than theory. Although she was deeply influenced by the teachings of Froebel and followed his system more closely than any other, she was not a blind devotee. She sought to keep alive the spirit of Froebel but at the same time to adapt his system to the needs of the children of Indianapolis. She was always interested in new theories and practices and cautioned against allowing any system to become formalized and perfunctory. She commented that, "Froebel needs to be delivered from many of his so-called followers."

Mrs. Blaker and her philosophy were inseparable, and in the last analysis the influence which she exerted on her students and associates and, through them, on the educational system, resulted in large part from her own personality. She had a vision, but equally important was the fact that she was able to imbue others with an understanding of her vision and to make it a reality.

She spoke often of the *joy* of teaching and believed that only those who derived joy from their vocation should teach. Her own manifest joy in her work was more effective than words in inspiring in her pupils an understanding of her concept of the teaching profession. Her enthusiasm and sense of her

mission also won the admiration and support of the community for the work which she represented. Everyone associated with her testified also to her courage and unquenchable optimism. Her courage inspired courage in other more timid souls. As Mrs. Lois Hufford remarked, "The word failure was not in her vocabulary." Mrs. John H. Holliday, who was one of her closest friends and co-workers for more than twenty-five years, said: "She is a constant inspiration to others. She is never discouraged. During the twenty years that I was president of the Free Kindergarten Society I never saw Dr. Blaker discouraged. When the rest of us were down to earth, worried and wondering where and how we could obtain the funds to carry on the kindergartens which were so necessary, Dr. Blaker would say, 'The Lord's work will go on.'"⁸

She had an understanding of people of all kinds and knew how to appeal to them and to get them to work together. Many who knew her testified as to her executive ability and capacity for organization. She knew how to delegate responsibility, but she was the leader, the center, about whom moved her board of trustees, her faculty, and students.

In selecting her faculty she sought strong personalities. She preferred to be surrounded by teachers who had convictions of their own and who were not afraid to express them. Among the members of such a group some frictions inevitably developed, but with her skill in human relations Mrs. Blaker was able to maintain harmony among them.

In her students she inspired both awe and love. Most of them were afraid of her at first, especially as she grew older. But as they came to know her, they realized that she had a warm affection for all students and was interested in their successes and in their futures. It was not without reason that she was frequently referred to as "Mother Blaker." She regarded all students and alumnae as part of her family. At every commencement she urged the graduates to maintain their ties with

the school, and nothing gave her greater pleasure than to hear of the progress of one of her former students, whether she was teaching in a mission school in far off India or in a district school in Indiana.

She won the love of the residents of the kindergarten districts, both children and adults, because of the good work she did among them and for the manner in which she dealt with their problems. For she and her staff and the members of the Free Kindergarten Society went into the districts, not as ladies bountiful dispensing charity, but as wise friends and counselors who sought to create self-respect and independence among those whom they helped.

Although the term "public relations" was not yet in vogue during her lifetime, Eliza Blaker was an expert in that field. She continually tried to keep the public aware of the work that she was doing and of the services of both the kindergartens and the Teachers College to the city of Indianapolis. She herself spent a great deal of time speaking before all sorts of groups, explaining the program of the kindergartens and the college. As a public speaker she was singularly effective. Although she was of less than average height and inclined to stoutness, her appearance and manner were impressive. Her voice—deep and resonant and beautifully modulated—commanded her listeners' attention and made a lasting impression. She was equally adept at appealing to such diverse groups as mass meetings of kindergarten mothers, church groups, teachers' professional groups, or members of the Chamber of Commerce.

Many of the warmest admirers of her and of her work were the men with whom she was associated. In educational circles in Indiana her position was unique. She was the only woman to enjoy a comparable position among administrators and one of the few women in the state to enjoy a comparable position in teaching circles. The presidents of the other colleges in the

state respected her, and some of them were her personal friends. The business and professional men of Indianapolis also held her in esteem. She was a member of the education committee of the Indianapolis Chamber of Commerce and frequently spoke before men's groups. But in spite of her entry into activities which were usually regarded as closed to women, she was not a feminist in the usual sense of the word. She believed that women were entitled to the same educational opportunities as men and that there should be more openings for them in the business and professional fields. But unlike most feminine leaders of the period she was not active in the woman-suffrage movement and would have been content to leave the actual conduct of government and politics to men.

Although her work necessitated many public appearances, she was not interested in publicity for the sake of publicity. In all cases she subordinated herself to her work. She was by nature modest and indifferent to personal honors and was always generous in giving credit to her associates for their help. Because she was convinced that she had a mission of profound importance she could say with sincerity, "The cause is greater than the individual." It was said of her: "She has always labored with a broad view. Her work is all done above the plane of personalities, and she cares little for the honors that it brings her in comparison with the good of the cause."⁹

College president, LL.D., educational pioneer, social worker—Eliza A. Blaker was all these, but she was at the same time a thoroughly womanly woman, even a romantic and sentimental woman. Emotionally she was a dependent sort of person who needed love and support. To her, homemaking and motherhood were a woman's highest calling. In spite of her devotion to her educational career her marriage transcended her professional life in its importance to her. With her husband she shared all her hopes and problems and joys and sorrows.

Louis Blaker was in no sense merely Eliza Blaker's husband, but was a successful businessman and civic leader in his own right. Throughout most of the years that he was in Indianapolis he was employed by the New York Central Railroad, being in charge of one of the freight lines. During the last two years of his life he was engaged in the real estate business. He was a charter member of the Transportation Club of Indianapolis and also a member of the Chamber of Commerce, the Board of Trade, and the Indianapolis Real Estate Board. He was also active in the Sons of the American Revolution and in the Masons, in which he was a member of the Scottish Rite.

Mr. Blaker, like his wife, had a strong sense of civic duty and served the community in various capacities. He was a Republican in politics, although not strongly partisan. At one time he served as one of the Marion County Commissioners. In this office he showed an interest in improving roads and bridges and in improving the treatment of the aged poor. At another time he set aside his own business affairs temporarily to serve as chairman of the Marion County Grand Jury, a task which he found distasteful but which he regarded as a civic obligation.

He was a sociable, jovial person with a wide acquaintance and varied interests. He had a reputation for his ability to tell a droll story. At the same time he had an old-fashioned courtliness reminiscent of the Victorian era. He was distinguished in appearance, with a mane of white hair and a sweeping white mustache. In matters of dress he retained a formality which was rapidly disappearing from the American scene. He always appeared at church in a frock coat, striped trousers, top hat, and kid gloves.

He also had the old-fashioned conviction that a husband should support his wife. So long as he lived he paid all of the household expenses and the personal expenses of his wife. Her

salary was used to further the work of the college and the kindergartens or to aid worthy students. Louis Blaker also took a great deal of pride in his wife's appearance. She herself was not particularly interested in clothes, but he insisted that she be elegantly dressed. At his urging she had her dresses designed and made especially for herself. They were usually of silk with always a touch of lace or some sort of a frill at the neck and on the sleeves. Thus attired she presented a distinguished appearance. She was a short woman, inclined to stoutness, but with her poise and carriage she gave the impression of being taller than she actually was. She had an abundance of dark, naturally wavy hair, which she wore parted in the center and drawn back into a braided knot at the back of her head—a less elaborate style than that effected by many women of the period and one which many of the students at the Teachers College copied.

When the Blakers first moved to Indianapolis, they made their home in a house at the corner of Illinois and New York streets, now a busy downtown intersection, but then in a pleasant residential neighborhood. In later years they built a house at Meridian and Twenty-fourth streets, a site which was then on the extreme north edge of the city and far away from the bustle of the downtown. It was within a short distance of the campus of the Teachers College. Their home life was extremely happy. In spite of her many outside responsibilities Mrs. Blaker took an interest in supervising the household and enjoyed displaying her own skill in the household arts, cooking special dishes for her husband and mending his clothing. Sunday evenings were especially dear to the Blakers. Then Mrs. Blaker put on an apron and prepared what her husband referred to as the "meal of the week."

Both Eliza's mother and her sister, Mary, lived with the Blakers after the move to Indianapolis. The ties between Eliza and her mother remained very close until Mrs. Cooper's death,

which occurred about 1908. When the daughter went to Lake Winona to conduct her summer school, the mother always accompanied her. Mary Cooper, who was several years younger than Eliza, was in some ways like a daughter to the Blakers. They enjoyed her youth and good spirits and liked to have her friends in their home. Mary Cooper followed in her sister's footsteps in becoming a kindergartner. She completed the course of training with the first group to graduate from the Blaker school and taught in the colored kindergarten for a number of years. She died while still a very young woman, and the loss was one to which the grief-stricken Eliza had much difficulty in reconciling herself.

After Mary's untimely death the Blakers tried to bring other young people into their home to fill the gap left by her passing. Mr. Blaker had numerous nephews and nieces who visited them, and one of them, Bert Blaker, made his home with them for several years. Bessie Cooper, the daughter of Eliza's brother John, also lived with the Blakers while she attended the Teachers College. At other times various students at the college lived with them, and sometimes younger boys and girls who needed assistance were brought into their home. Although she had no children of her own, Mrs. Blaker had a share in raising almost a dozen young people.

The Blakers had many friends and especially enjoyed entertaining them in their home. Their house was also a rendezvous for the girls of the college, who were always welcome there. Mr. Blaker was an extremely gracious and affable host. He was by nature gayer and more sociable than his wife, who was somewhat reserved and serious. Although she was warmly hospitable, she did not particularly enjoy social affairs outside her home and frequently attended them merely through courtesy or out of a sense of duty.

One interest outside the home which both shared was the Second Presbyterian Church. Both were members and active

in its affairs, and many of their closest friends were drawn from the congregation.

Louis Blaker was entirely sympathetic toward his wife's work and was one of her warmest supporters as well as her most trusted adviser. In nearly all things she leaned heavily upon him. Because of her intense conviction of the importance of her work she was sometimes inclined to be impetuous, but her husband's counsel and suggestions provided a wholesome restraint to any ill-considered action. He was helpful, too, in raising money for the college and the kindergartens. He participated enthusiastically in the social life of the college. He enjoyed the students, and his genial presence added to the gaiety of school dances and picnics.

Louis Blaker was a husband who did everything he could to ease his wife's burdens and who displayed unfailing devotion and courtesy to her. After they moved to their home on North Meridian Street he walked to the college with his wife every morning, carrying her basket of books and papers. They were usually accompanied by Jet, their black water spaniel, who remained with his mistress during the day while his master went to his downtown office. In the late afternoon Mr. Blaker returned to the college to escort his wife home. She frequently was too busy to leave when he arrived, so he waited patiently but urged Eliza, whom he always affectionately called "Sis," not to work so hard but to leave her cares and come home and "rest a bit."

Their happy union came to a sudden end when Louis Blaker died unexpectedly of a heart attack on April 28, 1913. His death was a shattering blow from which Eliza Blaker never fully recovered. Although she survived him by thirteen years and accomplished much and won many honors after his death, all who knew her agreed that thereafter she was a changed person, without her old buoyancy. Her husband was always in her thoughts and her letters and conversation were full of

references to him and to her need for him. She spent many hours sitting beside his grave in Crown Hill Cemetery, remembering the years they had spent together.

After her bereavement Mrs. Blaker tried to fill the emptiness in her life with work. Many times she said, "I want to work, work, work," and "When I am at work, then I am happiest." She even resented the necessity of taking an occasional vacation because she was reminded of earlier holidays with her husband. Her whole life became centered in the kindergartens and the college. She moved from her old home to a house near the campus, and after the Tuttle building was erected, she occupied an apartment there and acted as a house-mother to the girls who lived in the dormitory. In 1924 she moved into quarters in the double house adjacent to the campus.

Although there was no one who could supply the companionship which she had shared with Louis Blaker, after his death she turned to others for support. She relied increasingly upon Miss Emma Colbert, dean of the college, and Mrs. Blanche Mathews, the registrar, both of whom were friends of long standing. She also found some surcease of loneliness in her associations with the girls in the college. During the last years of her life she became especially devoted to Foreest Baber, one of the students, who later became Mrs. Emmett S. Tolle. After Foreest was graduated from the college Mrs. Blaker invited her to live with her. She gave Mrs. Blaker devotion and affection and performed many services which made her life easier. Mrs. Blaker came to regard her as a foster daughter and made her and her husband the principal beneficiaries in her will.

In 1916 Mrs. Blaker suffered a serious physical breakdown from overwork. Thereafter it was necessary for her to take an occasional vacation. During the last years of her life she spent part of each winter in Florida, accompanied by Foreest. During her absence the administration of the college was left

in the hands of Dean Colbert and Mrs. Mathews. Although she recognized that her physical condition required rest and the change of climate, she was lonely and discontented when she was away from the work and the associates she loved.

During her later years she received many evidences of the esteem in which she was held. An honor which was probably more dear to her than any other came to her in 1917, when Hanover College conferred upon her an honorary degree of Doctor of Laws. The commencement address on that occasion was given by John H. Holliday, one of the trustees of Hanover and one of her oldest friends. President William A. Millis, who conferred the degree, was another friend of long standing. In making the presentation Dr. Millis paid the following tribute :

“Hanover College has delight in searching out and giving recognition to essential merit. For these many years we have observed your splendid labor with and in behalf of the childhood of Indiana, your invaluable contribution to elementary education through the training of an army of teachers, as well as your successful administration of the vigorous institution over which you have been called to preside. In recognition of this great service which you have rendered, and of your ability as a woman and a leader of women, it gives me real pleasure . . . to confer upon you the degree of Doctor of Laws.”¹⁰

When Mrs. Blaker attended the convention of the International Kindergarten Union in Detroit in 1921 she was given an enthusiastic ovation by the delegates in recognition of her long record of service and her contributions to the kindergarten movement in the United States.

Another tribute, which must have been the source of much satisfaction to her, was a reception given in her honor in January, 1926, by the Indianapolis Propylaeum Association, an organization of representative women, whose purpose was the promotion of the educational, cultural, and social life of the city. The reception in honor of Mrs. Blaker was the first time

in the history of the city that a woman had been so honored.

Mrs. John Kern, one of the officers of the Propylaeum and one of the women closely associated with Mrs. Blaker in the Free Kindergarten Society and the Teachers College, was in charge of arrangements for the affair. She said that the members of the Propylaeum wished to honor Mrs. Blaker because "for nearly half a century she has honored Indianapolis by dedicating her life to the cause of education and the promulgation of the highest community ideals and standards. She has probably exercised a greater influence and molded more lives in Indianapolis than any other person who has lived in the community. . . . To the immediate community Dr. Blaker's work has been incalculable. She has been even more to Indianapolis than Jane Addams has been to Chicago. We consider it eminently fitting that she should be the first woman in the history of Indianapolis to be thus honored publicly."¹¹

For the reception the rooms of the Propylaeum were filled with many beautiful floral gifts which had been sent to the guest of honor. Mrs. Blaker, gowned in a dress of gray brocade silk, rose from a chair draped in royal purple to receive her guests. The entire city joined in paying tribute to her. The mayor and other city dignitaries were present as were also educational and social leaders. More than five hundred persons from all walks of life, including some of her colored friends, thronged the reception rooms. In addition, many persons who were unable to be present in person sent letters and telegrams expressing their love and admiration for her.

This tribute came to Eliza Blaker only a few months before her death. Although it was apparent to those who knew her best that her old vitality had been declining for some years, her final illness was of brief duration. During the early winter of 1926 she was at her post at the college as usual. On the first day of December she presided at the regular Wednesday faculty meeting. On Thursday she was seized with an attack of bron-

chitis while at work at the college and had to be taken home and confined to bed. On Friday night she suffered a heart attack and died quietly the following afternoon, December 4.

Although she was in her seventy-second year, her death came as a surprise and a shock to the faculty and students of the college and the people of Indianapolis. It was difficult to imagine the college or the kindergartens which she had administered for so many years without her. Her body, surrounded by floral offerings, lay in state in the college building on Sunday. Thousands of persons filed past the casket to pay a final tribute. Private funeral services, marked by extreme simplicity, were held in her home on Monday. She was buried in Crown Hill Cemetery beside her husband. Honorary pallbearers were: Alfred F. Gauding, E. U. Graff, Frederic M. Ayres, Evans Woollen, G. A. Schnull, Robert J. Aley, Lucius B. Swift, Hilton U. Brown, Joseph J. Daniels, Louis Levey, the Reverend Matthias L. Haines, and Henry M. Dowling. The Reverend Jean S. Milner of the Second Presbyterian Church officiated at the services and paid tribute to Mrs. Blaker. He spoke of the hope of the Christian faith in the immortality of the soul, but added: "There is another kind of immortality of equal worth, the life of service that continues to live in the lives of those over whom certain persons have influence. Mrs. Blaker enjoyed that sort of immortality. Her life was filled with deeds for others and her influence in molding the lives of many can never be measured in mortal terms."¹²

After her death expressions of grief and tributes to her poured in from many quarters—from former students, from associates in the educational world, from civic leaders, and from the humble people of Indianapolis whose lives had been brightened by her work. All of the Indianapolis newspapers carried not only long articles concerning her career but also editorials in recognition of her contributions.

Memorial services were held in her honor in the college chapel on December 14. Professor George H. Tapy of Wabash College gave an address at the morning service, while Dr. Stanley Coulter, dean emeritus of Purdue University, paid tribute to her in an address in the afternoon. On January 9, 1927, memorial services were held in the Second Presbyterian Church. The meeting was under the auspices of the board of trustees of the Indianapolis Free Kindergarten Society and the executive board of the Indianapolis Teachers College, Mrs. John H. Holliday and Mrs. David Ross being in charge of arrangements. At this meeting prayers were offered by Dr. Milner and Dr. Haines, the two clergymen who were probably most closely associated with Mrs. Blaker. Resolutions in her memory which had been adopted by the boards of the two organizations were read, and addresses were made by Professor Oscar Williams of DePauw University and by William A. Millis, president emeritus of Hanover College.

Of the many tributes paid Mrs. Blaker none was more perceptive of her true character and the meaning of her career than that paid by Dr. Millis. He said of her: "Her worth as a woman, an educator and a citizen is faithfully mirrored in the history of the Teachers College and the Free Kindergarten System in Indianapolis. She readily takes rank with the founders of other liberal arts and technical institutions of Indiana. For this contribution alone she deserves the grateful appreciation of the commonwealth.

"But added to this achievement, to Dr. Blaker more than to any other belongs the credit for the introduction of modern primary education into the public and private schools of the state. Through her public appeals, and particularly through the efficiency of the many hundreds of primary teachers and kindergartners who have received their training under her inspiration and supervision, she led the move for trained teachers, enriched curricula, psychological technique, social vision and

spiritual quality in the primary schools. She opened the eyes of the public school to the significance of the teacher's personality. She emphasized to her girls the graces of sincerity, naturalness, friendliness, helpfulness.

"Dr. Blaker also introduced into Indiana a new type of teacher training. Three characteristics of her teacher training were conspicuous. First, a technique grounded in child psychology, in a functional view of the child rather than in the outmoded 'faculty' psychology which regarded boys and girls as little men and women. Second, is her educational objective: namely, the development of wholesome personality, including character, the sense of trusteeship, and the spirit of refinement. Third, the cultivation of a religious background for the school.

"Possibly not the least of Dr. Blaker's contributions to her associates in her faculty, to her students, and to her adopted state, was her demonstration of woman's capacity for educational leadership."¹³

FOOTNOTES

CHAPTER I

¹ Friedrich Froebel, *Education of Man*, translated from the German and annotated by W. N. Hailman (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1900), p. 5.

² *Ibid.*, p. 7.

CHAPTER II

¹ (Indianapolis) *Year Book of Charities*, 1888-89, p. 22.

² Some years earlier, in 1875, Miss Fidelia Anderson, a member of the Social Science Association, had sponsored a free kindergarten. It had met in a building on Missouri Street, with Miss Alice Chapin as kindergartner, but had been discontinued after a short time.

³ Indianapolis Free Kindergarten Society, *Annual Report*, 1888-89.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 1890, pp. 10-11.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 1892, p. 11.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 1890, p. 11.

⁷ *The Kindergarten Monthly*, III (November, 1898), 36

⁸ Indianapolis Free Kindergarten Society, *Annual Report*, 1890, pp. 16-17; 1892, p. 13.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 1890, p. 16.

¹⁰ Quoted in *Indianapolis Free Kindergarten Society*, 1882-1942, pp. 5-6.

¹¹ Manuscript in papers of Eliza A. Blaker Club.

¹² Indianapolis Free Kindergarten Society, *Annual Report*, 1903, p. 10.

¹³ Manuscript in papers of Eliza A. Blaker Club.

¹⁴ *The Kindergarten Monthly*, III (November, 1898), 47.

¹⁵ *Pictorial and Biographical Memoirs of Indianapolis and Marion County, Indiana* (Chicago: Goodspeed Publishers, 1893), p. 236.

CHAPTER III

¹ *T. C. I. Collegiate*, December 17, 1926.

² *Indianapolis Press*, December 31, 1900.

³ *Indianapolis Star*, May 30, 1909.

⁴ Manuscript in papers of Eliza A. Blaker Club.

⁵ Quoted in Virginia Negley Hollingsworth, "The History of the Teachers College of Indianapolis" (unpublished Master's thesis, Butler University, 1946), p. 40.

⁶ Ruth Patterson, who came to the Blaker College as a student in 1902, continued to teach at Butler University for many years after the union of the Indianapolis Teachers College with that institution. She remained on the Butler faculty longer than any other member of the Blaker faculty, retiring in 1954.

⁷ Manuscript in papers of Eliza A. Blaker Club.

⁸ "The Teachers College of Indianapolis," in *Journal of Education*, December 9, 1920, p. 573.

⁹ Manuscript in papers of Eliza A. Blaker Club.

CHAPTER IV

¹ Manuscript in papers of Eliza A. Blaker Club.

² Speech to Women's Department Club, March 17, 1906. The notes for all the speeches of Mrs. Blaker which are quoted in the text are in the papers of the Eliza A. Blaker Club.

³ Indianapolis Free Kindergarten Society, *Annual Report*, 1888-89, p. 19.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 1892, p. 11.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 1890, pp. 9-10.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 1892, p. 10.

⁷ Statement of Lois Hufford, Julia Howe Moore, and Rubie Stapp, in papers of Eliza A. Blaker Club.

⁸ *Indianapolis Star*, January 14, 1926.

⁹ *Pictorial and Biographical Memoirs of Indianapolis and Marion County*, p. 238.

¹⁰ Manuscript in papers of Eliza A. Blaker Club.

¹¹ *Indianapolis Star*, January 14, 1926.

¹² *Ibid.*, December 7, 1926.

¹³ Manuscript in papers of Eliza A. Blaker Club.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Unpublished Materials

The author was fortunate in having access to the notes which Eliza A. Blaker had prepared for many of her addresses to her students, the mothers' clubs, and other groups. These papers throw much light on her religious beliefs and her educational philosophy. Except for these notes Mrs. Blaker left no personal papers.

For the details of her personal life the most valuable material was found in a biographical sketch written soon after Mrs. Blaker's death by Julia Howe Moore, who was a member of the faculty of the Indianapolis Teachers College and a personal friend of both Mr. and Mrs. Blaker. Additional details were found in briefer notes on her life by Miss Emma Colbert and Mrs. Lois Hufford. All of the above materials are in the possession of the Eliza A. Blaker Club. These sources were supplemented by personal interviews with Miss Colbert, who was for many years dean of the Indianapolis Teachers College and one of Mrs. Blaker's closest associates.

The "History of the Teachers College of Indianapolis," an unpublished Master's thesis, Butler University, by Virginia Negley Hollingsworth, was also useful.

The monthly and annual reports of the president and the secretary of the Indianapolis Teachers College were also used. They are in the College of Education of Butler University.

Published Materials

The *Annual Reports* of the Indianapolis Free Kindergarten Society and the bulletins of the Indianapolis Teachers College were especially helpful. A booklet, *Indianapolis Free Kindergarten Society, 1882-1942*, published by the society in observance of its fiftieth anniversary, was valuable. Some materials were found in *The Kindergarten Monthly*, a magazine published by the Free Kindergarten Society from 1896 to 1900.

Little information regarding Mrs. Blaker's career was found in books on the history of the kindergarten movement or on the history of Indianapolis. However, *Pictorial and Biographical Memoirs of Indianapolis and Marion County, Indiana* (Chicago: Goodspeed Publishers, 1893), contained a good sketch of the earlier aspects of her career. *Pioneers of the Kindergarten in America* (New York: The Century Co., 1924) contained information on Ruth Burritt and the Centennial Kindergarten Training School.

Some information concerning the kindergartens and the college was derived from the Indianapolis newspapers.

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